

Philip S. Foner

**BRITISH LABOR  
AND THE  
AMERICAN CIVIL  
WAR**

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# BRITISH LABOR AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR



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One of the controversies in recent historiography, both in England and the United States, has revolved around the role of British workers during the American Civil War. Did British workers, especially those in the textile districts of Lancashire, support the North, as tradition has it, or did they support the Confederacy? Philip S. Foner, distinguished historian and author, examines this question in his scholarly in-depth study devoted to the role played by British workers.

In recent years, critics and scholars have adopted the interpretation set forth by Mary Ellison, who upheld the view that British workers in the Lancashire districts supported the Confederacy and not the Union during the American Civil War.

Now Professor Foner firmly challenges the Ellison thesis and establishes that British workers did indeed support the Union cause and did oppose slavery and the Confederacy. The author bases his study on careful research of newspaper, pamphlet, and other contemporary sources, especially reports in the British labor and commercial press of workingmen's meetings during the American Civil War.

This scholarly work offers a major contribution to a complex and controversial historical issue.

**PHILIP S. FONER**, a native New Yorker, received a B.A. from the College of the City of New York, and an M.A. and a Ph.D. from Columbia University. He has taught history at City College, Lincoln University, Rutgers University, and Humboldt University, Berlin. He has also lectured extensively at universities here and abroad. Dr. Foner is the author of many books, including the five-volume *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, the five-volume *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, the two-volume *Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*, and the two-volume *Women and the American Labor Movement*. The author contributes frequently to scholarly journals.

ISBN 0-8419-0671-8

Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc.  
30 Irving Place  
New York, New York 10003

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**PHILIP S. FONER**



**HOLMES & MEIER PUBLISHERS, INC.**

**New York • London**

*To My Daughter Elizabeth*

First published in the United States of America 1981 by  
Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc.  
30 Irving Place  
New York, N.Y. 10003

*Great Britain:*  
Holmes & Meier Publishers, Ltd.  
131 Trafalgar Road  
Greenwich, London SE10 9TX

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**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

Foner, Philip Sheldon, 1910—  
British labor and the American Civil War.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. United States—History—Civil War, 1861–1865—  
Foreign public opinion, British. 2. Public opinion—  
England. 3. Labor and laboring classes—England—  
History—19th century. 1. Title.  
E469.8.F66 1981 973.7 80-26162

ISBN 0-8419-0671-8

Manufactured in the United States of America

## Contents

Preface	ix
1. The Setting	1
2. The Tradition and the Controversy	11
3. The Labor Press	25
4. The Voice of Lancashire	35
5. The <i>George Griswold</i>	47
6. The Voice of London	55
7. Varied Voices	67
8. The Triumph of the Union and Labor Reform	79
9. Epilogue	93
Notes	97
Biographical Sketches	117
Index	129
Illustrations follow page 66	

## Preface

One of the controversies in recent historiography, both in England and the United States, has revolved around the role of the British workers during the American Civil War. Did the workers, especially those in Lancashire, support the North, as the tradition has it, or did they, on the contrary, support the Confederacy? Although the literature on this subject is enormous, there has still been no single volume devoted to the role played by the British workers throughout the island. That is the purpose of this present work.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the staffs of many libraries and historical societies. While I was able to conduct research in England in the course of several visits to that country, this work would never have been completed without the continuing assistance of the staff of the British Museum. I also wish to express my thanks to the staff of the Manchester Central Library for its cooperation and assistance. The staff of the library of McGill University in Montreal, Canada was also of great assistance, making available to me on several visits the microfilm of the *Bee-Hive* and of the George Howell Papers, as well as other valuable materials in that library relating to British labor history. The late Professor Howard Weinroth of McGill University, himself an outstanding scholar in the field of British labor history, kindly spent hours discussing several important issues with me relating to the development of British labor.

I also wish to thank the staffs of the Tamiment Institute Library of New York University, the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, Oxford University Library, Harvard University Library, the National Archives, Columbia University Library, Bowdoin College Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston Public Library, and Lincoln University Library.

I am indebted to Adrienne Hunter who kindly furnished me with copies of the pertinent issues of the *Edinburgh Sentinel* while engaged in graduate work at Edinburgh University and to Professor Eric Foner who generously supplied me with reproductions of several items used in the illustration section.

I wish to thank my daughter Elizabeth Van der Paer and my brother Henry Foner, both of whom read the entire manuscript and made useful suggestions. Rosie Rudich of the Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus, Marx-Engels section, German Democratic Republic, read sections of the manuscript and also made useful suggestions for which I am grateful.

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## 1. The Setting

On December 20, 1860, five weeks after the election of Abraham Lincoln, the Republican party candidate, to the presidency of the United States, South Carolina formally seceded from the Union. Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama soon followed, and in February, 1861, the Confederate States of America were established as a separate government made up of seven slave states. Four more were to join to form the completed Confederacy.

The lame duck Buchanan administration did nothing to either encourage or impede secession, although pro-Confederate members of his cabinet sent shipments of arms to forts under Confederate control. In his State of the Union address on December 3, 1860, President James Buchanan announced that the federal government could not act in the then current crisis. Secession, Buchanan argued, was theoretically unconstitutional, yet neither the president nor Congress had the power to prevent it.

On March 4, 1861, Lincoln was inaugurated as president. His inaugural address combined firmness with conciliation. He assured the slaveholders that he would never interfere with slavery in their states ("I have neither the power nor the desire to do so"), but he also denounced secession as unconstitutional and vowed to uphold the laws of the United States by any means necessary.

When hostilities did break out in April, 1861, following the firing on Fort Sumter, most Americans did not envision anything like an extended war. Indeed, in his instructions to Charles Francis Adams, newly appointed Minister to England, Secretary of State William H. Seward stressed that the federal government relied upon the good sense of the citizens of the South to lead their states back into the Union. The logic of events, he felt, would speedily bring about the desired reconciliation. Offers of mediation and suggested compromise by the British government were, therefore, not to be entertained. Moreover, any recognition of the "rebels" would be considered an unfriendly act aimed at destroying the integrity of the American nation.<sup>1</sup>

The twenty-three-year-old Henry Adams accompanied his father as his private secretary, and as he neared England, he thought "that he was going to a friendly government and people." The very composition of the British government appeared to guarantee that it would not take any action hostile to American reunification. While Lord Palmerston, prime minister and head of

the government, was long noted for his antagonism toward the United States, he was also known to be cautious and sensitive to public opinion. He was not likely to commit himself precipitously to any policy that might lead to division and complications at home. The cabinet, moreover, was known to have widely differing views on the American question. To be sure, Palmerston's foreign secretary, Earl Russell, although antislavery, believed strongly that the South was entitled to the right of self-determination. Nevertheless, Henry Adams "could not conceive the idea of a hostile England."<sup>2</sup>

But within a few hours of his arrival, he was disillusioned. On May 14, the morning after the ambassador's arrival in Liverpool, there occurred the provocative publication of the Queen's Proclamation of Neutrality in which her country accorded belligerent rights to the Confederacy. While conferring these rights was not the same thing as recognizing the independence of the Confederacy, the North was indignant. For if, as was now likely, the South would be encouraged to believe that recognition might soon follow, the Confederacy would be fortified in its determination to resist. A disillusioned Henry Adams was not only convinced that recognition would soon follow, but in some of his letters, he concluded that Britain actually wanted war with America.<sup>3</sup>

What particularly disturbed Adams—as it did many Northerners—was the fact that there was ample evidence that Britain's real reason for the proclamation was not what the government had claimed. The public justification was based on a variety of proclamations issued by the Confederacy and the Lincoln administration. On April 17, Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, declared his intention of issuing "letters of marque for privateering." Two days later, Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of Southern ports and announced the government's intention of treating Southern pirates as pirates. Britain's response was that the only way she could avoid taking an active part in the struggle was by recognizing that the state of war existed and granting the South belligerent rights.

Yet it became clear that England had actually decided to grant belligerent rights even before the news of the various proclamations arrived. While it could be argued, as it was by even some of the most devoted friends of the Union in England, that the Queen's Proclamation of strict neutrality favored the North, the haste with which it had been issued and the lame rationale for it that was later developed served to convince many Northerners of the unfriendliness of the British government.<sup>4</sup>

Still, the belief that the war would be ended in a matter of months lessened fear in the North of what Britain might do next. Then, on July 21, 1861, a superior Northern army was routed in the first battle of Bull Run. Not only did it then become clear that the war would go on for an indefinite period, but discouraging news arrived of a sharp change in British public opinion, at least as far as some sections were concerned.

In the early months of the war, the great body of the British people and much of the British press favored the free states. But this sympathy was largely rooted in antislavery sentiment, and it soon deteriorated in the face of

assertions by Northern leaders that the main object of the war was to preserve the Union and not to touch slavery. Without a declared goal of abolition, the war, to many English people, appeared either pointless, or, as the South claimed, a crusade against states' rights and free trade.<sup>5</sup> Both of these principles had many sympathizers in England. In 1860, Britain had signed the Cobden-Chevalier Treaty with France, which accelerated the general downward movement of world tariffs. Therefore, it is not surprising that Richard Cobden, who later supported fully the Union side, was at first antagonized by the high tariff established by the North with the Morrill Act. With antislavery not an issue in the war, and with protectionism openly proclaimed by the North, the Union cause appeared to warrant little support—at least so argued the forces in England that were friendly to the Confederacy. Additional steps taken by the Lincoln administration only served to strengthen this view. In July, 1861, Lincoln sent to the special session of Congress a message in which all of the emphasis was placed on the preservation of the Union, thereby dismaying British supporters of the North. In October, Lincoln countermanded an order by General John C. Fremont proposing to free the slaves of disloyal commanders in his command area of Missouri. These actions overshadowed the fact that Lincoln had signed the first Confiscation Act, which declared that fugitive slaves running into the ranks of the Union Army who could prove that they had aided the Confederacy would be considered "contraband" and would not be returned to their owners.<sup>6</sup>

Present, but not very vocal during the first months of the war, was a section of British public opinion that openly sympathized with the Confederacy. This pro-Southern group was made up of varied and disparate elements, ranging from those who regarded the war as the struggle of "independence" against "empire," to those antagonized by the Morrill tariff. But predominantly, the friends of the Confederacy were drawn from the aristocratic and commercial classes—the former attracted to the South primarily by social and political ties, and the latter by economic interests. Aristocratic, "fashionable" England felt a natural affinity for the "genteel" South and feared, moreover, that a successful experiment in democracy abroad, symbolized by a Union victory, would eventually threaten its own position and lead to a revival and strengthening of the democratic movement in England—quiescent since the defeat of Chartism. The commercial element in Britain desired a successful secession movement in order to gain possession of the Southern market and to escape the restrictions imposed by the Morrill tariff. The manufacturing community was particularly concerned about bringing about separation peacefully and rapidly; a prolonged conflict would threaten the cotton supply, interrupt the exchange of goods between the South and England, and lead to a cancellation of debt by their former customers.

The defeat of the North in the first battle of Bull Run, added to the disillusionment over the depth and sincerity of Northern antislavery feeling, brought this sympathy for the South to the surface. For the first time, much of

the press, led by the *Times* of London, displayed open friendliness for the Confederates. Only a few of the larger organs, including the *Spectator*, the *Daily News*, the *Morning Star*, and the *Westminster Review*, remained friendly to the North.<sup>7</sup>

On March 30, 1861, the English magazine *Punch* carried the following jingle:

Though with the North we sympathize  
It must not be forgotten  
That with the South we've stronger ties  
Which are composed of cotton.

In the early 1850s, British imports of cotton from the American slave states amounted to between one and two million bales per annum. Between 1840 and 1860, the United States provided approximately 80 percent of Britain's cotton, while the percentage supplied by the West Indies declined from .70 percent to .31 percent. Over three-fourths of Lancashire's cotton came from the Southern states.<sup>8</sup>

From the outset, the Confederacy had counted on the effects of a prolonged blockade on the cotton supply for the European (especially British) textile industry. "King Cotton," E. Merton Coulter writes in *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865*—one of the volumes in the authoritative *History of the South*—"was to do its work through the creation of a cotton famine in England and France which would force those countries to break the blockade in order to secure the staple. As a means to this end, the Confederacy promoted the policy that the blockade, not yet effective, should be reinforced by withholding cotton from all the Southern ports. As an additional phase of its cotton policy, the Confederacy encouraged neutrals to accumulate large supplies in the Confederacy, which, of course, could be gotten only by breaking the blockade. It was believed that England would be forced to act to prevent a cotton famine, which would be followed by civil unrest."<sup>9</sup> "We have only to stop shipment of cotton for three months and a revolution will occur in England," a Confederate leader told William H. Russell, American correspondent for the London *Times*. "Hundreds of thousands of your workers will starve without our cotton, and they will demand you break the blockade."<sup>10</sup>

It has long been an accepted doctrine that the depression in the British cotton industry during the Civil War was caused by the inability of cotton textile firms to obtain sufficient quantities of raw cotton. There was, in short, a "cotton famine" caused by the blockade of Southern ports by the federal navy, which cut Lancashire off from its supplies of raw materials. Recently, however, Eugene A. Brady has pointed out that contemporary data and literature place the blame for the "so-called cotton famine," not primarily on a shortage of raw cotton, but "in large measure on an excess supply of cotton yarn and textiles that resulted from excess production during the years 1858 through 1861." Brady concedes that the Civil War did have some impact on the Lancashire textile industry but maintains that the "main effect was that of

inducing expectations of a future input shortage." These "expectations" resulted in a greatly increased price for raw cotton as a result of a speculative bidding up of the price of fairly ample stocks of cotton stored in factories and warehouses of the United Kingdom, which made cotton manufacturing relatively unprofitable. It was the uncertainty as to the future availability of raw cotton from the United States, rather than the actual shortage of cotton in Lancashire as a result of the Civil War, that constituted the significant effect of the war. The Lancashire depression, Brady insists, was caused "by the unprofitability of cotton textile manufacturing and not shortage of raw cotton."<sup>11</sup>

But one thing is indisputable. Whatever the precise cause, between 1861 and 1865, the British cotton textile industry suffered a period of severe unemployment. At its peak—in November, 1862—about three-fourths of the labor force of the Lancashire cotton industry was idle. Full-time employment of 533,950 workers in November, 1861 dropped to 203,200 in November, 1862, to 286,400 in December, 1863, to 303,400 in December, 1864, and to 344,300 in May, 1865. Meanwhile, the total unemployment went from zero in November, 1860 to 330,759 in November, 1862, to 247,463 in December, 1863, to 170,524 in December, 1864, to 99,545 in May, 1865.<sup>12</sup>

The large British manufacturers, with ample stocks of raw cotton, continued to run their factories at maximum profit, while others with capital reserves paid higher prices for the raw material. But the smaller manufacturers could not withstand the strain of the high price of raw cotton and had to close their doors.<sup>13</sup> For the workers of Lancashire, the years of the American Civil War were a period of unrelieved tragedy. The crisis in the textile industry gave the British manufacturers the opportunity to extend the working day, depress wages, and equip their factories with the newest laborsaving machinery. For those employed, the exploitation grew more intense.

But bad as conditions were for those still at work, they were far worse for those thrown completely out of work. Some workers either relied on odd jobs to eke out an existence, or, if they were able, returned to rural life as agricultural laborers. Others found work wherever they could. For all, their plight was expressed in song:

War's clamour and civil commotion  
Has stagnation brought in its train;  
And stoppage brings with it starvation,  
So help us some bread to obtain.

It's the song of the factory operatives,  
Short time, short time, come again no more;  
For we can't get out cotton from the old Kentucky shore;  
Oh, short time, short time, come again no more!<sup>14</sup>

Even making allowances for possible exaggeration, the reality for most of Lancashire operatives was grim indeed. The accounts in the contemporary press told a sorry tale. "A Lancashire Lad" (John Whittaker) wrote in the London *Times* of April 22, 1862:

I am living in the centre of a vast district where there are many cotton mills, which in ordinary times afford employment to many thousands of "hands," and food to many more thousands of mouths. With very rare exceptions, quietness reigns. . . . Hard times have come, and we have had them sufficiently long to know what they mean. We have fathers sitting in the house at mid-day, silent and glum, while children look wistfully about, and sometimes whimper for bread which they cannot have. We have the same fathers who, before hard times, were proud men, who could have thought "beggar" the most opprobrious epithet you could have hit them with, but who are made humble by the sight of wife and children almost starving, and who go before "relief committees" and submit to be questioned about their wants with a patience and humility which it is painful, almost shocking to witness. . . . But harder than this, our factory women and girls have had to turn out and plodding a weary way from door to door, beg a bit of bread. . . .

I cannot pass through a street but I see evidence of deep distress. I cannot sit at home half an hour without having one or more coming to ask for bread to eat. . . .

To see the homes of those we know and respect, though they are but workingmen stripped of every bit of furniture—to see long cherished books and pictures sent one by one to the pawn shop, that food may be had—and to see that food almost loathsome in kind, and insufficient in quantity, are hard things to bear. But these are not the worst things. In many of our cottage homes, there is nothing left by the pawning of which a few pence may be raised, and the mothers of us "Lancashire lads" have turned out to beg, and oftentimes knock at doors of houses in which there is as much destitution as there is in their own; while the fathers and lads themselves think they are fortunate if they can earn a shilling or two by street sweeping or stone breaking.

On April 10, 1864, almost three years to the day since the Civil War began, John Ward, a weaver of Clitheroe in Lancashire, wrote in his diary:

It is nearly two years since I wrote anything in the way of a diary. I now take up my pen to resume the task. It has been a very poor time for me all the time owing to the American war, which seems as far from being settled as ever. The mill I work in was stopped all last winter, during which time I had three shillings per week allowed by the relief committee, which barely kept me alive. When we started to work again it was with Surat cotton, and a great number of weavers can only mind two looms. We can earn very little. I have not earned a shilling a day last month, and there are many like me. My clothes and bedding is wearing out very fast and I have no means of getting any more, as what wages I get does hardly keep me, after paying rents, rates and firing. I am living by myself, my daughter and son-in-law having gone to a house of their own during the time I was out of work. I went twice to Preston to see my brother Daniel, but him and his family were not better off than myself, having nothing better than Surat to work at, and it is the same all through Lancashire. . . .

The principal reason why I did not take any notes these last two years is because I was sad and weary. One half of the time I was out of work and the other I had to work as hard as ever I wrought in my life, and can hardly keep myself living. If things do not mend this summer, I will try somewhere else or something else, for I can't go much further with what I am at.<sup>15</sup>

The Confederacy counted on this suffering, generally believed to be the result of the stoppage of raw cotton supplies, to aid their cause. Since the North was the perpetrator of the distress with its blockade, the Confederacy and its supporters in England anticipated a cry to arise out of Lancashire demanding that the blockade be broken. In fact, so worried was Richard Cobden in the fall of 1861 by this possibility that, although a friend of the Union, he warned United States Minister Adams that some way must be found to obtain a supply of cotton. He even urged an easing of the blockade as a remedy.<sup>16</sup>

It was precisely at this moment that a Confederate ship carrying James M. Mason and John Slidell, "Special Commissioners of the Confederate States of America," to represent the Confederacy in Great Britain and France, respectively, ran the Northern blockade and made its way to Cuba. In Havana, they boarded the British mail packet *Trent*, en route to the Danish island of St. Thomas, where they intended to book passage on a steamer bound for England. Around noon on November 8, the Northern warship *San Jacinto*, commanded by Captain Charles D. Wilkes, overhauled the *Trent* and fired a shot across her bow. When the *Trent* stopped in the water, Wilkes sent aboard a boarding party which brought Mason and Slidell, with their secretaries, back to the *San Jacinto*. The ship then proceeded to Boston, where the captured Southern envoys were locked up, albeit in comfortable accommodations.

The *Trent* affair—the boarding of an unarmed ship—does not loom large in military annals, but it occurred at a time when Northern morale was at a low ebb. The earlier "on-to-Richmond" optimism had been shattered at Bull Run, and nothing had happened to repair the damage. Suddenly, the *Trent* affair restored that morale. It was viewed in the North as a major victory—a smashing blow to the Southern cause. Wilkes was accorded a hero's welcome for his exploit.

To the British government, press, and large sections of the public, however, the *Trent* affair was an outrageous affront to England's honor. Previous friction with the North over neutral rights and other matters, and the widely held belief that Secretary of State Seward was an ardent Anglophobe, provided additional fuel for the anti-Northern fire. The pro-Confederate agents and supporters, seeing a golden opportunity for British intervention, pushed for an immediate declaration of war against the North. And, in fact, Great Britain did begin preparing for war and sent an ultimatum to Washington, demanding that Mason and Slidell be released.

No one in the Lincoln administration wanted war with Great Britain at a time when the nation was convulsed with its own civil conflict. Agreement was finally reached that Mason and Slidell would have to be released. Secretary Seward replied to the British ultimatum by agreeing to their release without actually admitting that the United States had committed any wrongdoing. Even though there was no transoceanic telegraph service, and the average passage between New York and Liverpool took twelve to fourteen days, the British government waited; Seward's message finally arrived, and the crisis was over.<sup>17</sup>

It was not to be the last crisis before the war ended, although the drive for

British intervention never again reached the intensity that it had during the *Trent* affair. It is well known that in the fall of 1862, Lord Palmerston and Napoleon III of France discussed jointly forcing the North to accept an armistice which they expected would lead to reconciliation with the South, with the understanding that in case of failure, England and France would recognize the Confederacy. Moreover, friction between the British and United States governments continued over the building of warships for the Confederate states in British yards and the practice of allowing partially completed ships to "escape" from the shipyards to unpoliced ports, where guns and ammunition were loaded on board.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the fact is that Britain neither recognized the Confederacy nor intervened to break the blockade.

A number of factors operated to check any precipitous move toward intervention. There was the fear that a war with the United States would cut off the American wheat supply on which England depended. The suffering this would bring would outweigh any benefits that might be derived from reopening the supply of cotton. Then, too, there was a large supply of raw cotton on hand and a large supply of finished cloth that could be marketed at an immense profit in a rising market, and the manufacturers felt no urgent need to reopen the cotton supply.<sup>19</sup> Still other factors were the strong opposition in the Cabinet to any sudden change in policy, and the inability of England and France to win Russia's cooperation. (The Tsar's government, acting in its own interest, assured the North of its support against England and France.) Even England and France themselves could not work out a simultaneous timetable for intervention. Other contributing factors that can be mentioned are the many doubts Palmerston had come to entertain about the policy of intervention; the military victories scored by the Northern armies at various stages when it appeared that the Union cause was hopeless; the ability of the British government and of voluntary efforts to alleviate the worst suffering in Lancashire through charitable subscriptions; and the impact of the preliminary and final Emancipation Proclamation in convincing that government that English public opinion would not tolerate intervention in behalf of the American slaveowners. It has even been argued that the publication in England in May, 1863 of *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation in 1838-39* by the British actress Fanny Kemble—an account of a few months' stay at the homes of her then husband, Pierce Butler, on St. Simons and Butler Islands, with its hair-raising account of the treatment of slaves—was instrumental in deterring Britain from joining the Civil War on the Confederate side.<sup>20</sup>

The actual effects of at least two of the factors mentioned above have aroused some controversy. With respect to the Emancipation Proclamation, for example, the point has been made that since it did not free a single slave in those states or parts of states still loyal to the Union, it was viewed cynically in England and did not have the impact credited to it.<sup>21</sup> There is also disagreement over the extent and effect of relief for the distressed workingmen of Lancashire. One study argues that relief committees were set up too

late in the crisis; that relief for the unemployed was used to browbeat workers into accepting lower wages, or was entirely misused, or was used for public improvements of benefit only to the capitalist class.<sup>22</sup> But another study contends that the relief work was eminently successful and efficient; that appeals for relief were generously answered by all sections of the population; that clothing and food were provided for thousands of needy workers; and that there was neither famine nor epidemic.<sup>23</sup>

But by far the greatest controversy has developed over a factor not listed above but traditionally viewed as the most important of all the forces responsible for preventing British intervention on the side of the Confederacy—the role played by the working class of England, including the workers in the Lancashire cotton mill district.

## 2. The Tradition and the Controversy

On January 28, 1862, the London *Daily News* carried a report of a "public meeting of all the working classes" held the previous evening at the Newhall, Edgware Road, London, "to consider how Englishmen ought to receive those slaveholders from the rebel states of America, Messrs. Mason and Slidell. A "Mr. Stedman, a working man," presided, and one of the resolutions adopted unanimously stressed that the "rebel agents, Mason and Slidell," were "utterly unworthy of the moral sympathies of the working classes of this country, inasmuch as they hold property in slaves, and are the avowed agents of a tyrannical faction in rebellion against the republic of America, and are the sworn enemies against the social and political rights of the working classes of all countries." Another unanimously adopted resolution voiced the meeting's opinion that "it is the duty of the working men especially (as unrepresented in the national senate) to express their sympathies with the United States in their gigantic struggle for the preservation of the Union"; to denounce all attempts of sympathizers with the Confederate States of America, especially "the *Times* and kindred journals of the aristocracy," to "embroil" England in the American Civil War, "and to give expression to the warmest sympathy with the abolitionists in America in their efforts to convert the struggle to an ultimate settlement of the slavery question."<sup>1</sup>

The meeting at Newhall achieved international renown when an account appeared in *Die Presse* of Vienna on February 2, 1862, under the heading, "A London Workers' Meeting." The article was one of a series of dispatches from London on events of the American Civil War written by Karl Marx. But this particular article is of special importance, for, in reporting the "London Workers' Meeting" (and adding details not reported in the *Daily News*), Marx presented the first of his analyses of the role of the British working class in the Civil War, and advanced the thesis that was to characterize it.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the article, Marx noted that while the British working class, "so preponderant" a component part of the society, was not represented in Parliament, "it is not without political influence." He then cited the fact that "no truly decisive measure" had ever been carried through in England "without pressure from without," and without the impact of "parliamentary popular demonstrations, which naturally cannot be staged without the lively

cooperation of the working class." Whether the working class was "artificially incited" or was "acting spontaneously," it had played the principal part, or according to the circumstance, "the noisy part" in the enactment of key legislation by Parliament and in the adoption of certain policies. In short, in the past, sections of the British ruling class had successfully employed the power of the working class, unrepresented though it was in Parliament, to achieve the enactment of legislation and the adoption of policies in the interests of those particular sections. In view of all this, Marx found the "attitude of the English working class" with regard to the American Civil War especially "striking."

What made it striking was the fact that circumstances appeared to insure that the British working class would once again play the principal role in forcing the government to adopt a policy favored by the English ruling class with respect to the American Civil War, namely, intervention on the side of the Confederate States of America. The blockade of the slave states by the Union Navy had halted the supply of cotton for British textile mills and resulted in a "stoppage of the factories and the shortening of the labor time," which had already produced "incredible misery among the workers in the northern manufacturing districts and was growing worse daily." While workers in other sections and industries were not suffering as greatly, they, too, were affected "severely" by a combination of factors growing out of developments in the United States—"reaction of the crisis in the cotton industry on the remaining branches of production, from the curtailment of the export of their iron products to the North of America in consequence of the Morrill tariff and from the annihilation of this export to the South in consequence of the blockade."

Not only had intervention in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy become "a bread-and-butter question for the working class," but the British ruling class, favoring the Confederacy from the outset of the war, had worked unceasingly to "inflame" the working class against the United States as the source of its misery. Even *Reynolds' Weekly Newspaper*, the "sole great and widely circulating workers' organ still existing," had been purchased for the one purpose of contributing to this campaign of inciting the British working class.

As Marx saw it, the stage was thus set for British intervention, and the working class was "fully conscious that the government is waiting for the intervention cry from below, the pressure *from without*, to put an end to the American blockade and English misery." Hence the great importance of the "London workers' meeting." As Marx put it:

Under these circumstances, the obstinacy with which the working class keeps silent, or breaks its silence only to raise its voice against intervention and for the United States is admirable.<sup>3</sup>

This was only the first of many references by Marx to the British workers as the ones responsible for averting a war with the North. In November, 1864, writing to Joseph Weydemeyer, the pioneer Marxist in the United

States, Marx put it plainly and bluntly, referring to the "labor kings of London" as the men who had "prevented Palmerston from declaring war upon the United States, as he was on the point of doing, through the monster meeting in St. James' Hall. . . ."<sup>4</sup> A few months later, Marx wrote that it was not the wisdom of the British ruling class but the heroic resistance of the working class of England, including the workers of Lancashire, who refused to allow their sufferings to be used by pro-Confederate sympathizers, "that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic."<sup>5</sup>

Marx's views were echoed during<sup>6</sup> and after the Civil War by other contemporaries,<sup>7</sup> and when the war had passed into history, their influence continued to be felt in the tradition and historiography in both Britain and the United States. The traditional view can be summed up as follows: The upper classes who dominated Parliament and the press sided openly with their fellow aristocrats of the Southern states. Gleeful at the prospect of a dismembered and discredited American republic, they repeatedly brought Britain to the brink of active intervention in aid of the slaveholding government. But they were restrained by the working class—including the spinners and weavers of Lancashire. Despite the cruel deprivation brought on by the "cotton famine," the operatives refused to endorse the idea of breaking the blockade, since they would be helping the slaveowners win and be defeating the cause of freedom represented by the North, which was linked to their own struggle for greater freedom of home—including, for example, the right to vote. While there may have been a few waverers early in the war, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation settled the issue for British labor, and from that point on, all English workers rallied to the side of the North with unanimity.

The pressure from below, the traditional view continues, was sometimes expressed in silent suffering, and at other times, in vast public meetings. And it forced the British government to forego recognition of the Confederate states while the United States Army was completing their defeat. "It ought not to be forgotten in the United States," wrote Marx, in summing up the traditional view, "that at least the *working class* of England, from the commencement to the termination of the difficulty, have never forsaken them."<sup>8</sup>

Certainly, American historians did not forget. For almost a century (like their counterparts in Britain), they upheld Marx's contention that while the ruling class supported the Confederacy, the British workers unanimously condemned the Slave Power; that the Lancashire cotton-mill workers made real sacrifices to prevent British intervention from breaking the blockade and restoring the flow of cotton to the mills—a sacrifice which Lincoln himself called "an instance of sublime Christian heroism which has not been surpassed in any age or country," and that the British workers were a significant, if not the most important factor in preventing intervention on the side of the Confederacy.<sup>9</sup> In "Die Arbeiterbewegung in der Vereinigten Staaten," ("The Labor Movement in the United States"), a series of more than twenty articles he published at the suggestion of Friedrich Engels in *Die Neue Zeit*

(1891–1895), Friedrich A. Sorge, the outstanding American Marxist of the post-Civil War era, began by writing that:

... England . . . would have liked to enter the war on the side of the slave-holders if — working *England*, the English workers had not raised their voices in favor of the North of the United States, in favor of abolishing slavery. . . . The proletarians of Lancashire, the weavers and spinners of the cotton factories in England who were put on half-time because of lack of cotton and overburdened by hunger and deprivation came together in mass meetings to wish Lincoln luck with the Emancipation Proclamation and openly expressed their inner sympathy with the cause of the Northern states of the Union. . . . The cause of the Union was saved in England. *Honor to the English workers for that!*<sup>10</sup>

And practically on the eve of the Civil War centennial, Richard B. Morris, noted Columbia University historian, completed the process when he expressed his own view and summed up the traditional view of British and American historiography in his authoritative *Encyclopedia of American History*:

The war divided British opinion. The upper class favored the Confederacy. The commercial interests, irked at the new high tariffs imposed by the Union, looked to the opening of a vast free-trade market in the Confederacy; British manufacturers and shippers expected to benefit from the defeat of their Northern competitors. The working class, however, and a large proportion of the middle class, favored the Union.<sup>11</sup>

In the main, Southern historians have not challenged the traditional view. Instead, they have tended to minimize the importance of British working-class opinion. For example, Frank L. Owsley, in his *King Cotton Diplomacy*, published in 1931 (and reprinted in 1959), argued that the workers had no influence either way. "The population of Lancashire and all industrial England," he wrote contemptuously, "was politically apathetic, sodden, ignorant, and docile, with the exception of a few intelligent and earnest leaders." Such people, he maintained, were not aware of world events and not concerned about slavery and the preservation of American democracy.<sup>12</sup>

The first serious attack on the traditional view came on the issue of the role of the British upper classes. W. D. Jones in 1953, H. C. Allen in 1954,<sup>13</sup> and J. M. Hernon, Jr. in 1961 all argued that the British upper classes were not that much interested in the Southern aristocracy as to become involved in the war on their behalf. Hernon pointed out that Palmerston himself, after deciding that England should stay out of the American struggle in October, 1862 (at least "till the war should have taken a more decisive turn") rapidly became involved in the problem, closer to home, of Bismarck and Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>14</sup>

In 1960 Allan Nevins, twice a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, writing in *The War for the Union*, accepted the view that the Lancashire workers sided with the North, but rejected the thesis that upper-class Britons were pro-Confederacy and that the Palmerston government favored intervention on the side of the South.<sup>15</sup>

The first attacks on the traditional thesis with respect to the role of the English working class came in British and American dissertations. In his 1955 Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, Richard Botsford emphasized that Scottish labor leaders supported the Confederacy, while J. M. Hernon, Jr., in a 1957 Johns Hopkins dissertation, found no Irish labor support for the Union.<sup>16</sup> In 1957 Sheldon Van Auken, in a bachelor's thesis at Jesus College, Oxford University, entitled "English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy: The Glittering Illusion," insisted that "there has been a persistent minimizing of the sympathy for the South, a tendency to accept uncritically such contemporary accounts as suggest sympathy for the North, and to discount or ignore those which gave a different impression." While Van Auken denied that Southern sympathy was "confined to a few, selfish and insincere wealthy men," he did not dispute the thesis that, in the main, British workers supported the Union cause.<sup>17</sup> Nor did Frank Thistlewaite in a 1959 study on Anglo-American relations, but he did note that the "alignment of British opinion towards the American Civil War was more complex than was once supposed." Moreover, he failed to find any "positive affinity" among the British ruling classes for slavery or for Southern aristocrats, and he argued that such pro-Southern sentiment as did exist derived "from a sense of liberty and self-determination as well as from hostility and fear toward Yankeedom." While accepting the fact that this feeling even existed among the working classes, Thistlewaite took the view that after the Emancipation Proclamation, British labor fully supported the Union, and that the Lancashire cotton operatives, transcending their economic self-interest, "took the lead in upholding the Union blockade."<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps the most influential of all the studies challenging the traditional thesis have been two articles by Royden Harrison of the University of Warwick—one in 1957 and the other in 1961. The first "British Labour and the Confederacy" (*International Review of Social History*), opened boldly: "There are few legends relating to the history of the Labour Movement which have enjoyed the influence and popularity of the story of how British workmen responded to the American Civil War." The legend was "their supposed unanimity in opposition to the Slave Power and their resistance to every ruling-class project for intervention on its behalf." While an occasional historian dared to venture the comment that "the response of the working class to the Civil War was more complex than has commonly been supposed," it was practically taken for granted in Civil War historiography that the entire labor movement and the working-class press had supported the Union. Harrison then proceeded to show that the conventional view—that the British working class "unanimously favored the cause of the North"—ignored the evidence which showed that while this class was deeply opposed to American slavery, "it had within it influential trade union leaders, editors, and advisors, who, in their hatred of the North, made friends to the Confederacy." In fact, "working-class newspapers and journals were, on the whole, hostile to the Federals." This was largely true before the Emancipation Proclamation, but even after 1863, Harrison insisted, a number of labor journals continued to lend their support to the Confederacy.<sup>19</sup>

Harrison pointed out that *Reynolds' News*, with its immense circulation, called upon the workers "to war with the Union." The *Bee-Hive*, which began publication in October, 1861 as the organ of the London Trades' Council, and which one historian had described as among the labor papers that protested vigorously "against those who would support the Confederacy for a bale of cotton"<sup>20</sup> turned out, in Harrison's study, to have been used by its editor "as a vehicle for his Southern sympathies," even to the extent of insisting that it would be perfectly legitimate for Britain "to break the blockade of the Southern ports."<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, this position was supported by "other London Trades Unionists" besides George Potter, the manager of the *Bee-Hive*. One of those labor leaders, T. J. Dunning, the secretary of the Bookbinders and the "father of London Trades Unionism," was and remained a "firm friend of the Confederacy" throughout the entire Civil War. Facey of the Bricklayers, Vize of the Painters, and Lens of the Shoeworkers also voiced distinctly pro-Southern views from the outset of the war.<sup>22</sup> In general, Harrison maintained, the working-class press of London, far from being solidly pro-North, was aggressively Confederate. These papers called for raising the Northern blockade and demanded armed intervention to get cotton for the mills of Lancashire.<sup>23</sup> Outside of London, the most important working-class paper was the *Glasgow Sentinel*, edited by Alexander Campbell, "the father of the Scottish Labour Movement." This paper, too, vigorously opposed the North, favored intervention to stop the war, and advised the North to abandon the conflict. In Lancashire and the north of England, where there were few working-class papers, the *Manchester Weekly Budget* and the *Oldham Standard* had wide circulation among workers. The former was "one of the most violently 'Confederate' papers in the country, while the latter grew increasingly hostile to the Union as the war progressed."<sup>24</sup>

Harrison listed a series of factors that explain Southern sympathies in British working-class circles, or at least a lack of enthusiasm for the federal cause. One was the failure of the Union to raise the issue of "emancipation"; another was the conviction, after defeat upon defeat of the Union army, that the federal cause was lost. Then again, working-class leaders, journalists, and advisors who thought of the industrial capitalists "as the main enemy," and who had come to hate John Bright and Richard Cobden for their reactionary roles in the Chartist and factory reform movements, became "the mainstay of the Confederacy in the labour movement." To these men, the very fact that Bright vigorously supported the Union was almost enough to swing them over to the side of the Confederacy. Moreover, just as they detested the hypocrisy of Bright and Cobden when it came to taking a stand on issues crucial to the workers, they shared a similar attitude toward abolitionists who were concerned about the horrors of chattel slavery, but were indifferent to the evils of wage slavery.<sup>25</sup> Not that these labor leaders defended slavery, Harrison was quick to point out, but rather they believed that the war against slavery should encompass wage slavery as well as chattel slavery. In any case, since the North did not proclaim the abolition of Negro slavery as its objective in

the Civil War, what point was there in the British workers starving and continuing to suffer when British intervention would quickly relieve their suffering?<sup>26</sup>

Four years later, Royden Harrison returned to the subject of the role of English workers during the American Civil War, this time in an article, "British Labor and American Slavery," published in *Science & Society*, the American Marxist journal, in the spring of 1961 and reprinted four years later in Harrison's *Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics, 1861-1881*. The first twenty-four pages of the new article were a repetition, although differently organized, of what had been presented in "British Labour and the Confederacy." But toward the end of the new article, Harrison asked the question: "How far is it still correct to speak of the pro-Federal sentiments of the British working class?" Suddenly, the answer is quite different from what we have been led to expect. Harrison puts it unequivocally: "From the end of 1862, there is overwhelming evidence to support the view that the great majority of political conscious workmen were pro-Federal and firmly united to oppose war. As soon as the feelings of the masses were tested at public meetings they showed where they stood." On the basis of evidence contained in E. D. Adams' *Great Britain and the American Civil War*, Harrison concluded that British workers organized five pro-Union meetings in 1862, fifty-six in 1863, and eleven more in 1864. Even these figures underestimated "the amount of working-class activity," he went on. Finally, whenever Southern sympathizers tried to organize pro-Confederate working-class meetings, they invariably failed, and when they tried to get workers to support efforts to recognize the South, the answer was "Never!"<sup>27</sup>

In his original article, "British Labour and the Confederacy," Harrison had conceded that, in the main, pro-Confederate sympathy within British working-class circles found no expression in public meetings, and when one was called in Blackburn, attended by several thousand workers, a resolution calling for mediation between the North and South "in order to bring the fratricidal war to an end," was overwhelmingly defeated. In fact, under the leadership of the Blackburn Weavers' Association, the meeting declared itself in favor of the "policies of Abraham Lincoln and the Union movement." But Harrison had then proceeded to dismiss its significance and had concluded that while the organized workers of the cotton towns "did not demand armed intervention," it was because they and their union leaders were reluctant "to discuss foreign questions." In general, he said, the attitude of Lancashire workers was and remained "noncommittal," and, in any event, meetings of workers in favor of the Union elsewhere in England were not significant either way.<sup>28</sup>

But in 1961, Harrison sang a different tune. Even the "celebrated silence" of Lancashire was evidence of labor's rejection of the Confederacy. Moreover, he now insisted:

It is the record of public meetings which provide the most convincing support for the traditional account of working-class opinion on the Civil War.

These meetings proved that while the aristocracy was overwhelmingly for the Confederates . . . the working class stood by the North American Republic.<sup>29</sup>

To be sure, working-class support for the Union, Harrison points out, did not prevent British intervention on the side of the Confederacy, for even before the working class "had given conclusive proof of where its sympathies lay," Palmerston had already decided that the risks of intervention outweighed its advantages. Nevertheless, the working-class stand for the Union cause was of the utmost importance: "It gave an immense impetus to the demand for democratic government in Europe and Britain in particular. In England, the demand for reform was made in direct association with the declarations in support of Lincoln."<sup>30</sup>

Either because his original article had been criticized as one-sided,<sup>31</sup> or because he himself realized that he had gone too far in 1957, Harrison had clearly modified his position. He continued the process, and in the 1971 introduction to his work, *The English Defence of the Commune, 1871*, he wrote:

...the eighteen sixties were remarkable for the concern displayed by the British working class with foreign policy. They made the cause of Poland their own. They accorded to Garibaldi a reception which far surpassed in its magnitude and its enthusiasm anything which was even given to the dignitaries of established powers. Above all, during the American Civil War, ignoring the advice of many of their own leaders and most of their own journals, they came down decisively on the side of Abraham Lincoln and against all recognition and support for the Slave Power.<sup>32</sup>

In *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Class of Britain*, published in 1960 to jointly mark the one hundredth anniversary of the election of Lincoln as president and the formation of the London Trades' Council, and issued in conjunction with the British Trades' Union Congress, J. R. Poole indicated agreement with some of Royden Harrison's findings. He conceded that the Union cause encountered difficulty because of the "strikingly hostile attitude of many of the older generation of labour leaders, particularly those who controlled the labour press." Although they opposed slavery, they "were inclined to minimize this aspect of the struggle," and were more influenced by hostility to the industrial capitalist system in England and in the United States:

They believed they saw in the American manufacturers an alarming duplication of their own master class which they had fought so long and bitterly; and was not John Bright, the old opponent of the British factory acts, now enlisted in the cause of the North? Bright, a mill owner himself, was not their man.<sup>33</sup>

Yet, like Harrison in his second article of 1961, Poole emphasized that these labor leaders and the press they controlled spoke only for themselves. "They seem to have been increasingly out of touch with their following, of which, on this issue, they may have been aware, for they very seldom took the risk of adopting the usual procedure of the time of calling public meetings in support of their stand."<sup>34</sup>

Strangely enough, Royden Harrison's original article, "British Labour and the Confederacy," and not the amended versions he published later, became the basis for the revisionist historiography of the role of the British workers in the Civil War. By 1967, the author of a review essay in the *Journal of Southern History*, basing his thesis on Harrison's original article and ignoring the second one, could write that "possibly a majority of British workingmen sympathized with Confederate independence."<sup>35</sup>

But the apex of revisionist historiography with respect to the role of British workers during the Civil War was still to come. In 1965, Michael Brook had published an article, "Confederate Sympathies in North East Lancashire, 1862-1864," which was based mainly on the cotton weaving town of Burnley.<sup>36</sup> Then early in 1973, in the "Bibliographical Essay" at the conclusion of the first volume of his *Britain & the War for the Union*, Brian Jenkins announced flatly: "The myth of British labour's total support for the Union despite the suffering the Civil War caused them, and opposition to slavery, has now been dispelled." This conclusion, he indicated, was based largely on "the doctoral dissertation on Lancashire and the American Civil War by Mary Ellison, which is about to be published under the title *Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War*."<sup>37</sup>

Later that same year, Ellison's book was published, and it set out to prove that the Lancashire workers—the very workers who were supposed to have suffered unemployment and distress but nevertheless heroically supported the Union—had instead backed the Confederacy. At the close of the book, there was an epilogue entitled "The History of a Myth: British Workers and the American Civil War" by Peter d'A. Jones.<sup>38</sup>

Ellison asserts at the outset that by 1862, there was a cotton famine in Lancashire which forced the majority of the mills to close down. "Unemployed operatives," she continues, "were forced to choose between starvation and charitable relief. Many sought to avoid this choice by urging that some kind of aid be given by Britain to the South to help establish Confederate independence and so facilitate the renewal of cotton to Lancashire." Wherever "unemployment was extensive," there was "an explosion of sympathy for the Southern cause." But this historical fact had been distorted "by the myth of the operatives' passivity and preference for neutrality, a myth created by the misconceptions of Richard Cobden, John Bright, and William Gladstone and strengthened by one unrepresentative Manchester meeting." Moreover, since "the mass of Lancashire cotton workers had no effective way of forming a pressure group," their clear and positive stand in favor of the Confederacy and their demands for "some form of pro-Southern governmental actions," including even, if necessary, war against the North, were "passed over and then forgotten." Instead, a vast, false myth was created that these workers had actually supported the Union and opposed every effort to alleviate their sufferings by breaking the blockade.<sup>39</sup>

From her study of the local and periodical press, Dr. Ellison concludes that the cotton workers of Lancashire (like their employers) were overwhelmingly pro-Southern. The workers, she maintains, were suspicious of Abraham

Lincoln's war aims from the outset, and his Emancipation Proclamation did nothing to allay their suspicions. As the war proceeded, they grew increasingly vociferous in their demands, through meetings and petitions, for some form of British action to save the Confederacy, whether through recognition, mediation, or by raising the Northern blockade. They were not indifferent to the slavery issue, but they viewed the war basically as a "glorious struggle for independence on the part of the South and a shameful attempt at oppression on that of the North." Moreover, they regarded the North's steps to abolish slavery, including the Emancipation Proclamation, as "only using abolition as a means of gaining political power," while they were convinced that the South would take steps, if independent, to end the slave system:<sup>40</sup> "A free South would bestow liberty on the slave and outdo the hypocritical North by introducing full integration." After all, Negroes were enlisted in the Confederate Army by 1865, "a clear step toward abolition."<sup>41</sup>

Ellison's methodology in proving her thesis is simplicity personified. It is to assert repeatedly that pro-Northern meetings were contrived, while pro-Southern gatherings were spontaneous. It would appear that she has read the local press, but she has simply refused to credit any reports that contradict her thesis.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, her judgments are boldly asserted without convincing evidence. If Rochdale takes a pro-Northern stand, then it must be because "the persuasive oratory of Cobden and more particularly Bright, dramatically influenced the attitude of Rochdale," and was the "root cause" of its pro-Unionism.<sup>43</sup> Meetings to gain support for the Northern cause, as she presents them, are either masqueraded as workingmen's gatherings or organized by abolition societies and conducted by outside speakers.<sup>44</sup> One would therefore conclude that the South made no effort of any kind to organize British public opinion. Neither *The Index* nor Henry Hotze, paid agents of the Confederacy in England, are anywhere to be found in Ellison's study.

"The most famous and most misleading meeting of the war years was held in the Free Trade Hall on 31 December 1862," Ellison writes. Her treatment of this "most famous" meeting is fairly typical of her methodology. She concedes that the "carefully arranged demonstration created an artificial but lasting impression of sincere working-class support for the North." It was "supposedly composed mainly of workingmen and called together quickly by two operatives, Edward Hooson and J. C. Edwards." Yet the "Union and Emancipation Society was strongly and vocally represented. . . . Even more ironically, the formally attired mayor of Manchester led a middle-class delegation which probably dominated the meeting and was largely responsible for resolutions that were passed denouncing Southern slavery and supporting the North's emancipation policy."<sup>45</sup>

It would seem that if one were going to set out to destroy the authenticity of the "most famous" meeting of the war years, one would at least make sure to provide ample evidence to justify the conclusion that it was a "contrived" meeting that in no way reflected the viewpoint of the Manchester workers. But no such evidence is presented. Instead, we are simply told that the Union and Emancipation Society "was strongly and vocally represented," and that "the

formally attired mayor of Manchester" led a middle-class group that "probably" ran the show. To begin with, even that section of the local press cited by Ellison as her sources—and they are her only sources (although she significantly ignores the *Manchester Examiner*, which was friendly to the meeting)—conceded that the audience was made up mostly of workingmen. Then again, to leave us with a charge of "probable" domination by middle-class elements is proof that Ellison is afraid to assert that she really has no evidence that nonworking-class elements did dominate. Since the proceedings of the meeting prove that most of the speakers were actually workingmen, it is clear that Ellison had decided in advance to debunk this "most famous" Manchester gathering, regardless of the evidence contradicting her conclusion that it was a contrived gathering purporting to speak in the name of the working class.

Having now established, at least to her own satisfaction, that the famous a workingmen's meeting was a fraud, she proceeds to label it, whenever she has occasion to refer to it again, as "that famous delusory gathering of workingmen."<sup>46</sup>

Or take the meetings of workingmen held to greet the arrival of the *George Griswold*, the relief ship bearing supplies from the United States for the distressed operatives of Lancashire (which we will examine in detail below). Aside from failing to study any American sources, and therefore incorrectly crediting John Bright with originating the idea of a relief ship, she minimizes the significance of the meetings, ignores the number held outside of Manchester, and asserts, without the slightest supporting evidence, that the Manchester meeting was attended by "a small number of operatives," when even the local press conceded that the Free Trade Hall was so jammed with operatives that an outside meeting had to be assembled to handle the overflow. Ellison does grudgingly acknowledge: "No doubt affected by this generosity, the meeting passed a resolution pledging its gratitude and asserting its allegiance to the principle of neutrality."<sup>47</sup>

At no point does Ellison prove that meetings held in Lancashire to support the Confederacy were "workingmen's" meetings, a difficult task, to be sure, since even most of the pro-Southern papers in those towns did not make this claim.<sup>48</sup> Nor does she prove that petitions to the Cabinet and Parliament calling for a pro-Confederacy policy were signed by any workingmen. It is merely asserted.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, in the only case where she lists the names of individuals associated with the petitions, there are no workingmen among them.<sup>50</sup> Again, the very paper she cites in connection with a delegation to the government on behalf of the Confederacy made the point that the group consisted of "aristocrats and reverends," with not a single workingman among them.<sup>51</sup>

In the entire study, there is only one worker quoted. This is on page 142, where the anonymous "A Working Man" is briefly quoted as expressing "his satisfaction" at the possibility that "peaceful intervention" by Britain "to end the war peacefully" was being approved by "earnest men" of Bolton. Apart from the fact that the tone of this only quotation from a workingman in a work

of several hundred pages is a far cry from the belligerent one ascribed earlier by Ellison to Lancashire workers, one is inclined to ask what kind of credibility should be accorded this major dependence on an anonymous letter in the *Bolton Chronicle*<sup>52</sup>—especially when statements by pro-Union workingmen of Lancashire whose names are featured prominently in the local press are either dismissed by her as “contrived” or are ignored.

In the epilogue, “History of a Myth: British Workers and the American Civil War,” Peter d’A. Jones does not concern himself with such mundane issues as the credibility of Ellison’s assertions. He has not the slightest doubt that she has “effectively demolished” the “century-old belief” that the “British working class in general . . . driven by a deep hatred of slavery and a yearning for the creation of American-type democratic government at home, formed a massive bloc of opinion that restrained the pro-Confederate, ‘aristocratic’ leanings of the English government class.” In his enthusiasm for his task, Jones does not seem to be aware that he is claiming more for Ellison than she does for herself. She does not assert that she is demolishing the “myth” as it applies to the “British working class in general,” but only its application to the workers in Lancashire.<sup>53</sup>

Having thus disposed of the “myth” to his own satisfaction, Jones goes on to ask why the “myth” developed in the first place, and he answers that the theme of the self-sacrificing, devoted, pro-Union British worker has political origins with “at least three sides.” First, there was the role of John Bright. Fearing that the defeat of the democratic experiment in America might retard its advent in England, Bright, together with his “famous colleague Richard Cobden,” preached the story of the noble sacrifice of the Lancashire workingmen to public meetings in the years from 1861 to 1865, and, through their correspondence with important political figures in the United States, convinced even the American government and people that the starving British workers were rejecting the siren song of the “blockade opening” propagandists and remained firm to the North and freedom.<sup>54</sup>

Then there was the role of William E. Gladstone, who is also part of the first of the three sides. Eager to bolster a shaky case for extending the franchise, Gladstone conveniently forgot his “Jeff Davis has made a nation” Newcastle speech of 1862 and cited the “astonishing” behavior of the cotton operatives as proof that they could be trusted with the ballot. “They knew,” Gladstone declared, “that their distress lay in the war, yet they never uttered the wish that any effort should be made to put an end to it, as they held it to be a war of justice, and for freedom.” Then came the point of his argument:

The admirable conduct of the suffering workpeople cannot be sufficiently acknowledged by any passing tribute of mere words; it must surely tend to increase the confidence reposed in them by other classes of society: nor can I refrain from repeating here what I have said elsewhere, and expressing my hope that whenever again the time arrives for considering the question of the franchise, that conduct will be favorably and liberally remembered.<sup>55</sup>

To justify the vote, the workers of England had to prove that they could suffer admirably, hence their willingness to sacrifice for the noble cause of

freedom represented by the North had to be invented! So, at any rate, argues Jones in explaining the development of the “myth.”<sup>56</sup>

On the American side, the second side of the three-part conspiracy was the role played by Charles Francis Adams and Henry Adams: “Father and son both hated British high society, and its patronizing, arrogant attitude towards the United States.” Henry, who is accused of having penned many of his father’s letters to Washington, took revenge on the British aristocracy by making the working class the real heroes of England: “By March 1863 Henry Adams had formulated the myth complete, in both its sections: the upper class were hateful and the lower noble.”<sup>57</sup>

We come now to the third side of the conspiracy, and it is represented by one man—Karl Marx. It was he, and the Machiavellian role he played, more than any other factor perhaps, that was responsible for giving the myth currency. With his dispatches during the Civil War, the message to Lincoln, written for the General Council of the International Workingmen’s Association (First International)—an organization we will discuss below—Marx created the image of the heroic British working class, who, despite the terrible hardships flowing from the cotton blockade, prevented the ruling class of England, which controlled the government, from intervening on the side of the Confederacy and breaking the blockade.

Two disparate ideological faiths, Jones argues, have worked since the Civil War against questioning the myth. For the Marxist movement, the story of the workers’ defiance of the feudal slavocracy has served as an inspiring example of working-class solidarity. Americans who do not share the Marxist viewpoint have proudly accepted the idea that their Civil War was the touchstone of English progressivism, and that the sacrifices made by the British workers for the Union were rewarded after the war with the granting of suffrage. Historians, both in England and the United States, proved to be as gullible as ordinary citizens, and general histories and monographs in both countries recited the myth of the British workers’ heroic support for the Union.<sup>58</sup>

Jones then traces briefly the reaction in historiography against the myth, highlighting particularly the contributions of Royden Harrison, but conveniently overlooking Harrison’s position in his second article, in which he came down firmly on the side of the contention that the pro-Confederacy union leaders and the workers’ press did not reflect the views of the British workers who, especially after 1863, almost unanimously and from one end of the island to the other, supported the Union and opposed the Confederacy. In doing this, it is worth noting, Jones followed Ellison’s lead, for she writes that in several articles Harrison has “shown . . . that there was among English workingmen a considerable amount of support for the Confederacy.”<sup>59</sup> Harrison, of course, showed nothing of the kind. He showed that there was much support among some trade union leaders and in the labor press, but in one of the articles Ellison herself cites—“British Labour and American Slavery”—he clearly asserts that the vast majority of English workingmen, especially after January 1, 1863, repudiated this position and fervently supported the Union.

Finally, Jones concludes triumphantly that the revisionist studies, climaxcd by Ellison's work, have demolished the myth of the noble worker during the Civil War—the long-standing “illusion, necessary alike to the Marxist and American world views.” Fortunately, it “is now evaporated.”<sup>59</sup>

It is doubtful whether in the entire catalogue of the conspiracy theory of history, one can find a presentation so questionable as the twenty-page “The History of a Myth: British Workers and the American Civil War.” It boggles the mind and strains the imagination to the breaking point to be asked to believe that so many reliable and careful twentieth-century scholars were, up to the 1950s, when the reaction got underway, taken in by a plot that was carefully hatched by John Bright, Richard Cobden, William E. Gladstone, Henry Adams, and Karl Marx.

But Jones and his defenders might respond, what about Ellison's carefully researched study of the Lancashire press? As demonstrated above, Ellison's methodology should not convince any real student of this controversial subject. To be sure, in keeping with the general tendency in current historiography to accept uncritically works that denigrate the working class,<sup>60</sup> Ellison's study has been hailed for having proved conclusively that the workers of Lancashire were pro-Confederate. The newly published *The Hungry Mills* by Norman Longmate, a study of Lancashire during the American Civil War, is a case in point. Longmate accepts Ellison's thesis without any further study of the subject, and, according to a review in *The Guardian*, in a “chapter based on Mary Ellison's recent research, kills the myth that the Lancashire workers were pro-Union in the American Civil War.”<sup>61</sup>

But even a scholarly reviewer who considers Jones's epilogue “excellent,” and unequivocally accepts the view that British labor support for the Union is a “myth” and a “liberal legend,” finds *Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War* a “disappointing book.” He charges the author with passing remarks and conclusions with “no elaboration” to develop her thesis; notes that “only two or three of the fifty-five Lancastrian journals listed in her bibliography have a distinctly working-class orientation”; observes that her sweeping conclusions are based on only six public meetings, none of which could be called working class, and then points to the most serious defect in this widely hailed work:

... while Dr. Ellison tends to take reports of Copperhead meetings at their word, she treats those of pro-Federal gatherings as aberrations which can safely be ignored. Thus, while a pro-Confederate resolution adopted at a meeting in Preston is automatically judged “a sure indication that the majority of the people in the town were behind the South” (p. 65), a series of pro-Northern meetings held in the west of the county are abruptly dismissed as “the long arm of the Manchester Union and Emancipation Society” (p. 94). All in all, the picture which emerges is an exaggerated and oversimplified as that which prevailed before.<sup>62</sup>

Where, then, does the truth lie? We shall attempt to answer this question.

### 3. The Labor Press

What was probably the first comment by a British labor paper during the Civil War was one that struck a pro-Union note. In “The Political Week” column of the *National Co-Operative Leader* of May 17, 1861, C. C. Cosmopolitan predicted that the war in the United States “will be the source of no end of misery,” not only in the United States, but also in the manufacturing districts of England, through the failure of the cotton supply, and in the whole community, through the large decrease in the export of manufactures to the American market, which would inevitably take place. As a result, “not only will the labour market be crowded with men out of work, but the food and clothing will have to be sold at an increased rate.” Yet even these were not the only concerns of the *Leader*, for:

... there is another danger which we must signalize; it is that, through the blind interest of the day, some of the cotton lords might be induced to sympathize with the slave-owners, and give them covert or avowed help. This must not be. England cannot, for the sake of interests endangered today, deny the noble stand she has taken against slavery. Whatever may be the amount of misery, produced by this struggle, we have no doubt that, ultimately, it will turn out to be productive of great advantage to the cause of free labour.<sup>1</sup>

The *Bricklayers' Trade Circular* of October, 1861 also took a pro-Union stand, although not as vigorously as the *Leader*. It briefly summed up the issues involved in the Civil War. The Southern states, it explained to its readers, claimed that they were exercising the right of self-government and that they had as much right to do so as the American colonies had to separate from the mother country in 1776. But, the *Circular* argued, it was necessary not to be confused by this analogy, for there was a real difference. The colonies “had a great grievance to complain of, which they could not get redressed, while the Southerners are fighting for greater despotic power in relation to slavery.” The *Circular* made it clear that it stood with the Northern states, but it urged them to “repudiate slavery altogether, and then they will have the sympathy of all lovers of progress and liberty.”

But the views of the *National Co-operative Leader* and the *Bricklayers' Trade Circular* were distinctly the exception, and Royden Harrison's evaluation of the pro-Confederate stance of the leading British labor papers early in the Civil War is substantially correct.<sup>2</sup> A study of the labor press confirms

the accuracy of his conclusion that, in the main, there was support in these papers for recognizing Southern independence and breaking the Southern blockade.

On September 29, 1861, for example, London's *Reynolds' Newspaper* featured the leader, "England Must Break The Blockade Or Her Millions Will Starve." After blaming the "criminal obstructions of our rulers and the stupid apathy of our capitalists" for having failed to develop the "cotton capabilities" of India and other regions in order to relieve Britain's "degrading dependence upon the Slave States of America,"<sup>3</sup> the paper urgently advised that the British government "*must break the American blockade*," or millions of British subjects would be "abandoned to starvation."

Law, custom, practice, and a host of other arguments were cited to justify this decision. Then *Reynolds' Newspaper* dealt with the leading objections to the policy it advocated. One was that by breaking the blockade, England would be helping the South against the North and "contributing to the perpetuation of negro slavery in the states of the South." It dismissed this argument as a "most gross and lamentable delusion," explaining:

The North does *not* fight the South in order to emancipate the negroes. On the contrary, President Lincoln and his Cabinet have over and over again expressed their unwillingness to make the rights of the poor, enslaved Africans the price of the reconstruction of the shattered Union. . . .

Indeed, *Reynolds* argued, only through a successful separation of the free and slave states could slavery be abolished, for once the South was truly independent, the constitutional obligation of the North to protect the slave states' inhabitants "in the enjoyment of their lawful property" would disappear. Hence, with a free nation immediately adjoining the slave states, "slavery is doomed. Clearly, then, any help given to the seceded states to establish their independence is help given the negroes to escape their bondage. For this reason, also, the people of their country ought to tell their rulers that *the American blockade must be broken*."

But would not attempting to break the blockade bring on a war with the Northern states? Not at all. The Northern states were not so foolish as to enter into a war with a power like England when they had enough to do to carry on the war against the Confederacy. But even if war came:

Better a foreign war than a civil war. Better fight the Yankees than starve our operatives. But if we are to escape the horrors of a civil war, and the crime of exposing four millions of our artisans to starvation, *the American blockade must be broken*.

*Reynold's Newspaper* then concluded:

For all these reasons—for the sake of the Americans themselves—to put an end to the insane and fratricidal strife in which they are now engaged—to preserve the power and greatness of our country—the prosperity of our commerce—to save our peaceable and industrious millions from famine—to avert from England the untold horrors and inexplicable crimes of civil war—to protect our cities from the flames, and prevent their streets from becoming

blood-red human shambles—to escape the long years of class hatred which civil strife is sure to engender—to enable us to maintain our position as a great empire, and our existence as an independent nation, *the American blockade must be broken*.

A week later, on October 4, 1861, *The Working Man*, published in London, also turned its attention to the cotton blockade. It was not its first comment on the Civil War. In August, 1861 the paper had hailed General Benjamin Butler's order to his troops not to return fugitive slaves to their owners on the ground that they were "contrabands" of war. This order, the paper concluded optimistically, revealed that the North was moving toward making the war a struggle against slavery. Then came General Fremont's order freeing the slaves under his command in Missouri—one of the four slave states that had not seceded and joined the Confederacy. Now *The Working Man* was convinced that the war was definitely moving in an antislavery direction.<sup>4</sup>

The October 5, 1861, leader entitled "The Cotton Blockade" reflected the labor paper's disillusionment. It announced in a despairing tone:

Four millions of our working brothers in this country are now on the verge of starvation, because their precarious position does not allow of their being one month—nay, one week—out of work. Although their accumulated labour has created heaps of wealth, they must starve if they stop from working, for the produce of their industry has been appropriated by others.

Yet already, in the cotton manufacturing districts, most mills were working short hours and most of them would soon be closed altogether. The inevitable result would be the throwing of four million working men out of employment, "either to die of starvation, to crowd the workhouses, or to go to compete against other working men in trades where the market is already too abundant." Yet the mill owners could not keep their mills going without cotton. What then should be done? What advice could a labor paper give to workingmen facing starvation?

Our task is a difficult one. To advise patience to starving men, and to promise better times, would be delusion; to advise them to save, so as to form a starting capital would not be better.

The only answer was to get cotton. But what of the fact that this would help the slaveowners defeat the North? News arriving in England that very week had answered that question. President Lincoln, it was learned, had requested General Fremont to countermand his proclamation. In short, the North had demonstrated that no difference existed between it and the South as far as the millions kept in slavery were concerned. This enabled British workingmen to reach a logical decision:

Now that it is clear that the Northerners in America are not fighting for the emancipation of the slaves, we are relieved from any moral consideration in their favor, and as the Southerners are not worse than they are, why should we not get cotton? If our purchasing cotton from the Southerners had at all tended to prolong

the slavery of our African coworkers, we might have perhaps suffered more patiently. If the North, in blockading the Southern ports, had had emancipation in view, we might have seen the sacred cause of free labour was on their side, but, since they also are its enemies, why should we not get cotton? Why should we starve any longer, since, unfortunately, cotton has become our bread?

*Let us, then insist upon raising this blockade they have put upon the Southern ports.*

Like *Reynolds' News*, *The Working Man* saw the breaking of the blockade as bringing both Southern victory and the emancipation of the slaves. For if the Union was split asunder into free and slave states, "then the slaves will not have to run so far as Canada to find freedom." Thus, two results would be achieved simultaneously: "the raising of this blockade must advance the cause of free labour, at the same time that it will save four millions of our fellow-workers from starvation and despair."

*The Working Man* did not refer again to the need to break the blockade, although it did analyze the Civil War and its significance to British workers in a series entitled "The American Labour Question." Its conclusion was that before the outbreak of the war, the slaveowners had moved from justifying the enslavement of blacks to the "open declaration that all laborers, white or black, are only fit for chains, because they are not forsooth 'gentlemen.'" Unfortunately, although their own "self-protection" required that they "countenance the utter crushing out of slavery," the white workers in the United States had been so influenced by slaveowning propaganda that they "can see in abolition nothing but amalgamation, 'a big buck nigger,' or 'a nigger wench,' as a choice for husbands or for wives." This attitude was largely responsible for the fact that the war had failed in the North to develop in an antislavery direction, and as a result, had little significance for the British working classes.<sup>5</sup>

Then, of course, there was the *Bee-Hive*.

Late in April, 1865, a large meeting was held in London's St. Martin's Hall, sponsored by a "workingmen's Anti-Slavery Committee." The committee had been organized to congratulate the workingmen of the United States "on the triumph of Negro Emancipation and the success of the Federal cause," and also to express grief over the assassination of President Lincoln. At this meeting, a handbill was circulated extensively criticizing the appointment of George Potter, manager of the *Bee-Hive*, as secretary of the committee. The handbill consisted of an introduction and extracts from editorials in the *Bee-Hive* published early in the Civil War and an extract from two letters in the labor weekly during February, 1864. The introduction charged (1) that the extracts from the *Bee-Hive* in 1861 were from the pen of George Troup, "Potter's right-hand man and political mentor," who was maintained on the *Bee-Hive* despite opposition to him by the directors because of his well-known pro-Southern views. Potter fully supported Troup's pro-Confederate sentiments, the introduction pointed out, and as if to add insult to injury:

George Potter, having turned his back upon the North in their dark days of sacrifice and trial, now comes forward to claim a share in the victory in which he has borne no part whatever, and even ventures at this meeting to act the part of

bugleman for those true-hearted republicans on whose cause he frequently cast opprobrium during the time that tried men's souls.<sup>6</sup>

Founded by George Potter in October, 1861 "in the interests of the working classes" during the nine-hours movement in the London building trades, the *Bee-Hive* was without a rival as a source of information about the British labor movement during its existence, which lasted until the end of 1876.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the first fifty issues of this important labor weekly have disappeared and can no longer be consulted. (The earliest copy of the *Bee-Hive* that has been preserved is No. 51, October 4, 1862.) Hence, the extracts from editorials published in the handbill and reprinted in the *Miner and Workman's Advocate* are especially important. Written by George Troup, a British journalist who had already made his pro-Southern sympathies clear in other journals, such as *Tait's Magazine*, they indicate that the early *Bee-Hive* leaned heavily toward the Confederacy. One editorial, dated October 19, 1861, in an answer to correspondents, said of the war between the North and the South: "It is not a war undertaken by the North to give freedom to the slave, but to force prohibitive and protective duties on the South." A week later, the war was said to have originated "in the determination of the North to have the profit without the details of slavery in the South." In the same issue of October 26, 1861, the *Bee-Hive* urged, "Let the South go," and advised the Northern states to cease their attempts "to coerce their Southern neighbors." Again, on November 23, 1861, urging that the South be allowed to exist as a separate nation, the *Bee-Hive* predicted that in the event that the South was allowed to exist separately, the Fugitive Slave Law would instantly be repealed and the South would be obliged "to promote the comfort of their slaves, and gradually to seek emancipation and the formation of a peasantry."

On November 30, 1861, the *Bee-Hive* urged: "Break the Blockade!" It argued that since the blockade of the Confederate States was "ineffectual," it should be "broken in strict consistency with the law of nations." By the end of 1861, the *Bee-Hive* was denouncing Lincoln as a "mindless man," and Secretary of State Seward as head of the "wicked men" who made up Lincoln's Cabinet—"atrocious jobbers, who live better by hostilities than they ever do in peace." On December 7, 1861, the *Bee-Hive* even called for "an alliance with Napoleon III of France for a joint war against the North."

Not even the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation caused the *Bee-Hive* to change its tune.<sup>8</sup> On October 11, 1862, it sneered: "President Lincoln offers freedom to the negroes over whom he has no control, and keeps in slavery those other negroes within his power. Thus he associates his Government with slavery by making slaveholding the reward to the planters of rejoining the old Union." A few weeks later, the *Bee-Hive* again discussed the "character of President Lincoln's proclamation," and voiced the opinion that in view of its inadequacy, the best hope for freedom for the slaves was "a split of the states."<sup>9</sup>

In November, 1862, a general meeting of delegates from the thirty-one Metropolitan Trades' Societies, convened by the London Trades' Council, took up the question of aiding the "distressed Lancashire operatives."<sup>10</sup> A resolution introduced by Applegarth of the Amalgamated Society of Car-

penters (who had just returned from Lancashire and had "been an eyewitness to the distress and suffering now existing in the cotton districts") pledged the societies "to do all in their power, either by levies or voluntary subscriptions, as each society may for itself determine, to assist as promptly as possible, and in a permanent way, our distressed brethren in Lancashire." Speakers from the bookbinders, boilermakers, basketmakers, zinc workers, bricklayers, and stonemasons supported the resolution with brief speeches. The greatest applause was for Connolly of the stonemasons. He blamed the government of England for the distress in Lancashire: "As statemen, they must have known that war with or in America would stop the supply of cotton, and it was their duty to have provided against a contingency such as has arisen!" This brought "cheers." But "loud chchers" followed his next statement:

The aristocracy of this country, or a large portion of them, had prolonged the lamentable war now raging by their undisguised sympathy with the slave-owners and slave-dealers of the South. Had they not done so, the war would long since have terminated in favor of the North, cotton set at liberty and the slave emancipated.<sup>12</sup>

George Potter, manager of the *Bee-Hive*, was present at the meeting, but he did not dare to speak out in opposition to this vigorous defense of the North and denunciation of the Confederacy. He knew that the pro-Southern views expressed in the editorial columns written by Troup were having a serious effect on circulation and were beginning "to be destructive of the *Bee-Hive's* prosperity." He knew, too, that the position voiced by Connolly, and not the pro-Confederacy editorials in the *Bee-Hive*, reflected the opinion of the vast majority of the trade union leaders and of the rank-and-file workers.<sup>13</sup>

The *Bee-Hive's* cynical attitude toward the North and its openly pro-Confederate stance were not condemned at the London Trades' Council meeting, but they were already becoming too much for the trade unionists and working men to stomach. A change in the paper's policy was demanded; a new board of directors with a plainly pro-Union point of view was installed, and George Troup was removed as editor.<sup>14</sup> Praising this turn of events, George Howell, a former Chartist and secretary of the London Trades' Council during the years 1861 and 1862, wrote to the *Bee-Hive*:

For some time past, I have felt it to be a standing disgrace that the only bona fide working men's paper which we have should be a constant apologist for, and supporter for the pro-slavery Confederacy. I have blushed with shame, "many a time and oft," at the misstatements, false colourings, and one-sided and sophisticated reasonings, that I have had to behold from week to week in this organ of working men. And we cannot praise too much the conduct of the directors in effecting an alteration.

How could I recommend it to my fellow workmen while it supported the cause of the nigger-driving and slave-holding South?

What! shall we, who are a standing protest against the tyranny of capital in our own country, rejoice to see the chains of our brother toilers riveted more closely in another? And they are our brother toilers, notwithstanding a difference in colour!<sup>15</sup>

What, asked Howell, could possibly justify "liberty-loving Englishmen" supporting the proslavery party? It had been argued that the Southern armies had been to some extent successful in the field. "But does their success sanctify their cause?" Howell asked. Then there was the argument, advanced by "some wiseacres," that the North was fighting for empire, the South for independence. But it was "a perversion of terms" to speak of the North as fighting for empire, since it was "simply fighting to conserve its own, to maintain intact the Union which has made them great as a nation." Moreover, how many of those who opposed the North as fighting for empire and who supported the right of the South to fight for her independence were ready to uphold these principles elsewhere?

When we sent forth our armies into India to crush the rebellion against the natives, we were fighting for empire, yet, who lifted up their voice in condemnation of the course we pursued? Should Ireland, or Scotland, or any of our colonies raise their standard of revolt, how few of those who eulogise the South at this moment would raise their voice in behalf of such an insurrection? Ireland has often asserted her right to independence, let her history tell the answer she has received.

The South, moreover, had not even the same justification as did the others referred to. For the cause the Southern rebels were fighting for was "nothing more nor less than the right to maintain and extend the principles of slavery." Lest he be accused of misstating the grounds upon which secession took place, Howells quoted the statement of Alexander H. Stephens of the Southern Confederacy (words that were often quoted by British supporters of the Union):

Our new government is founded on the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man, that slavery is his natural and normal condition. Our new government is the first in the history of the world based on this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.

Negro slavery is but in its infancy. We ought to increase and expand our institutions.

Let these words, Howell pleaded, sink deeply into the minds of all Englishmen, "especially trades' unionists." Let British workers also remember that the most vociferous champions of the South (personified by the *Times* of London, "the great misleader of public opinion, and a numerous progeny of smaller fry") were the "enemies of liberty and progress" in the past, and would be so in the future:

Their hatred of Italian unity and liberty was evinced by their denunciation of Garibaldi and his co-patriots, now of the Abolitionists of America, and ere many moons be past, we shall find them denouncing us because we dare ask for some voice in the representation of this country.<sup>16</sup>

On November 29, 1862, George Julian Harney, former radical Chartist and an early Socialist, wrote in the *Jersey Independent and Daily Telegraph*:

We know the English working class, and we should not fear to read Frederick Douglass' "Appeal to Great Britain" to an assembly of the most

disressed and most unhappy of the workless opratives of the North. We are confident that they would receive its every sentence with shouts of concurrence and applause. The voice of the eloquent "African" is the voice of Truth before which the falsehoods and sophisms of the pro-Secessionists are scattered as chaff by the invincible tempest.

The day before, Harney had published Douglass's "Appeal." In it, the former slave who had escaped from slavery, risen to the highest ranks in the abolitionist movement, and built an enormous reputation during two visits to England among the British public,<sup>17</sup> urged Englishmen to forget the past mistakes of the Lincoln administration:

The proclamation of emancipation by President Lincoln will become operative on the first day of January, 1863. The hopes of millions, long trodden down, now rise with every advancing hour. Oh! I pray you, by all your highest and holiest memories, blast not the budding hopes of these millions by lending your countenance and extending your potent and honored hand to the blood-stained fingers of the impious slaveholding Confederate State of America.

It was now clear: "The North is fighting on the side of liberty and civilization, and the South on the side of slavery and barbarism." Intervention, Douglass argued, would not aid a single unemployed worker in Lancashire or still the cry of the children of the poor for bread. But even apart from this, humanity could not permit the needs of the British mills to determine the future of millions in slavery: "Must the world stand still, humanity make no progress, and slavery remain forever, lest your cotton-mills should stop and your poor cry for bread? . . . Can any thinking man doubt for one moment that intervention would be an aggravation rather than a mitigation of the evils under which your laborers mourn?" England, too, could learn much from the conflict in the United States. "The lesson of our civil war to you is the cultivation of cotton by free labor. It tells you you should base your industry and prosperity on the natural foundations of justice and liberty. These are permanent. All else, transient—hay, wood and stubble."

The time for intervention had long since passed, Douglass concluded. "If at any time you could have honorably intervened in American affairs, it was when the Federal Government was vainly striving to put down the rebellion without hurting slavery—when our army and generals wore the brass collars of slave-dogs, and hunted negroes for their rebel masters." And he ended as he had begun:

That gloomy and disgusting period ended on the 22d Sept. 1862. From that day our war has been invested with a sanctity which will smite with death even the mailed hand of Britain, if outstretched to arrest it. Let the conflict go on! There is no doubt of the final result, and though the war is a dreadful scourge, it will make justice, liberty and humanity permanently possible in this country.<sup>18</sup>

"Frederick Douglass is correct," Harney insisted editorially. "The war in America is a War for Freedom." He pointed to the gains for freedom already chalked up in the war. There was the new antislavery treaty with Great

Britain, conceding the right of search; the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, the capital of the United States; the decree by which all fugitive slaves belonging to rebel owners were set at liberty; the law forbidding the officers of the federal army to return fugitive slaves to their owners; the law abolishing slavery in the territories; Lincoln's proposal to the four border slave states which had remained in the Union to compensate them if they emancipated their slaves; recognition by the United States of the republics of Liberia and Hayti, and finally, the proclamation emancipating the slaves in the rebel states, if still in rebellion, after January 1, 1863. Against these "irreversible results" one had merely to place the repeated declarations of the Confederate States that they fought "to establish a system of which slavery shall be 'the cornerstone,' and which shall interminably perpetuate the bondage, degradation, and misery of millions of human beings!" "Judge ye, Freemen!" Harney concluded, "which side is worthy of sympathy."<sup>19</sup>

The same issue that carried this forthright defense of the Union cause also carried the notice that it was the last one under Harney's editorship. His strong pro-Northern stand had aroused the resentment of the owners, and Harney was forced to resign.<sup>20</sup> "My power to serve the good cause through that paper had ceased," he informed Charles Sumner, Massachusetts abolitionist senator. However, he had not been rendered totally ineffective. He was arranging, he told Sumner, to reprint Frederick Douglass's "Appeal" in sheet or tract form for "gratuitous local distribution," especially among the workers of Lancashire. He was convinced that "read from pulpits, from platforms, in workshops, and by English friends, it could not fail to have an immense effect on public opinion"<sup>21</sup>—a prediction that was soon to come true.<sup>22</sup>

It is clear, then, that the partisans of the Confederacy in the trade unions and in the labor press did not find themselves uncontested. J. R. Poole is incorrect when he notes, as quoted earlier: "They seem to have been increasingly out of touch with their following, of which, on this issue, they may have been aware, for they very seldom took the risk of adopting the usual procedure of the time by calling public meetings in support of their stand."<sup>23</sup> Almost a hundred years before this was written, a Mr. Gilpin, M. P. for Northampton, explained why this was the case. "He knew," he declared, "that there was not a man of sufficient eloquence or ability to carry in any fairly gathered meeting of the workingmen of this country, in any part of the kingdom, a resolution in favor of slavery."<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. The Voice of Lancashire

On September 6, 1862, the *Glasgow Sentinel*, a fervent supporter of the Confederate cause, carried a leader entitled "Artizan Advocates of Mediation." The point of the heading was explained in an analysis of meetings held in Lancashire since July, 1862, at which, the *Sentinel* said, the operatives had concluded that since the North did not come out clearly and forthrightly against slavery, it was "impossible to regard either of the combatants as champions of liberty." Hence, "as hungry men," they saw no reason for the maintenance "of a bootless struggle for power which interferes with the commercial relations upon which the bread of thousands is dependent." All over Lancashire, the paper went on, the "unemployed operatives" had demanded at such meetings that the Southern states be recognized, that the British government, either alone or in concert with other countries, bring the war to a close by mediation, and that traffic with the Southern states be restored.

One of the towns in Lancashire that was suffering most severely from the stagnation in the textile industry and the consequent widespread unemployment was Blackburn. Meetings were held in Blackburn precisely during the period referred to by the *Glasgow Sentinel*, and on the very subject mentioned—but the stand taken at these meetings bore no resemblance to the description in "Artizan Advocates of Mediation."

The *Blackburn Patriot* of July 5, 1862, and the *Blackburn Standard* of August 13, 1862, carried accounts of two meetings in that Lancashire town, both dealing with the American Civil War. (The account in the *Patriot* was headed "MEDIATION IN THE AMERICAN QUARREL. MEETING OF OPERATIVES." The one in the *Standard* simply stated: "PUBLIC MEETING ON THE AMERICAN WAR.") The first meeting had been called "to petition Parliament to adopt the motion of Mr. John Turner Hopwood, M.P., for mediation between the Northern and Southern States of America, in order to bring the fratricidal war to an end." It had been called for five o'clock, but when, by half-past five, none of the proponents of the movement for mediation had made an appearance, "Miles Aspinall, a Blackburn operative, got into the cart provided for the speakers, and called loudly for the men who had summoned the meeting, for he said, if they were not prepared with arguments to support their cause, others were prepared

with arguments in opposition to it." By six o'clock, four or five thousand people were present, but none of the principals had arrived, and several operatives were "distributing printed slips, ridiculing the movement and the actors in it." Finally, James Aprin, a manufacturer of High-street, Blackburn, opened the meeting as chairperson, and Mortimer Grimshaw, another Blackburn manufacturer, proposed the first resolution, which declared: "That in consequence of the prostration of the commerce of the country and widespread destitution arising therefrom," the meeting recommend that it was of the opinion that the time had arrived for "the Government of England . . . to use its influence in putting an end to the prosecution of the war in America, . . ." and, together with "other great European powers, . . . establish peace between the parties."

Speaking in favor of the resolution, Grimshaw assured the audience that he did so only because of his concern for the "welfare" of the Lancashire operatives. This was greeted by cries of "No, no, never!" He then proceeded to argue that the war in America was "not a question of slavery or no slavery, but one of independence or supremacy," citing as proof the fact that President Lincoln had annulled General Fremont's order freeing the slaves under his command. William Aitkin (of Ashton-under-Lyne), the next speaker in favor of the resolution, advanced the same argument, and then asked if it was right "that six millions of white men—of their own race—should be enslaved in order that four millions of negroes could go free." He was greeted by hisses. When he charged that there was no point in discussing slavery in America, since no people of the world "worked so hard as the weavers, spinners, etc., of Lancashire and the adjoining counties," there were loud cries of "We're free!"

At this point, Mr. Crossley, secretary of the Blackburn Weavers' Association, introduced an amendment to the resolution calling for the British government to only act in the "American difficulty" in such a way as to "uphold the policy of President Lincoln" and the reestablishment of the American Union. Another official of the Weavers' Association seconded the amendment and declared vigorously that there was no point in even discussing the original resolution: "It was evident from recent transactions in the North, that from the reestablishment of the Union would date the freedom of the negro population of the States. (Cheers)." The *Blackburn Patriot* then reported: "The amendment was then put and carried almost unanimously, only about twelve hands being held up for the original resolution."<sup>11</sup> John Matthews then attempted to revive the original resolution, but the entire audience left and moved over to another platform, where "it was moved and seconded, and carried by acclamation: 'That the working men of Blackburn have no confidence in the men who got up the meeting, nor in Mr. Hopwood, the member for Clitheroe.'" The assembly then broke up "in an orderly manner."<sup>12</sup>

Several weeks later, another public meeting was held in Blackburn's Town Hall to take into consideration "the propriety of petitioning Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, to adopt measures, in concert with other

European Powers, in reference to the unhappy struggle now being carried on in the states of North America, with a view to promote an early termination of hostilities." The hall was crowded "to excess," reported the *Blackburn Standard*, "by an audience chiefly composed of working men."<sup>13</sup> R. H. Hutchinson, the mayor, presided and on the platform were assembled the leading citizens of Blackburn, but not a single representative of its working class.<sup>14</sup>

Right from the outset, it was clear that the chief purpose of the meeting was to attempt to undo the effect of the previous gathering, which, according to the complaint of a Colonel James Jackson, a leading speaker, had adopted "a resolution . . . in direct opposition" to the purposes for which the present meeting had been convened, namely, to adopt a resolution deplored the war in North America as "ruinous to the hostile parties and to the vast population of this district depending upon the cotton trade," and sending a petition calling upon the Queen, together with France and other powers, "to recognise the independence of the Confederate States of America." Jackson conceded that there was considerable opposition in the community to the course recommended in the proposed resolution, and he urged the opposition not to forget the bitter suffering Blackburn was experiencing:

Deposits had been withdrawn from savings banks, superfluities of clothing and furniture and even necessary articles had been taken to the pawn shops; sick-clubs were no longer able to perform their duties, because the members could not continue their subscriptions; the shopkeepers who, last year, could afford to give credit, were now on the verge of ruin; and the whole district was passing into a state of bankruptcy.

"And nothing could relieve them from this but fresh supplies of cotton," he declared. But where was the cotton to come from? Only America offered sufficient supplies to promise immediate relief. But the Northern blockade made this impossible, and unless the North was compelled to end the war, this situation might continue indefinitely. Still, there was a real alternative to continued ruin:

The North could not yield to the South; but the North would yield to the voice of Europe, and to the demands of the millions who were starving on account of the war which all believed must be without any results but the separation of the North from the South.

Jackson acknowledged that many workingmen believed that a call for breaking the blockade would lead to war with the North, but he asked if "absence of employment and consequent destitution of the people" was to be preferred to war. It was also argued that war would cut off the corn supply from the United States, but, he asked, "what was the use of cheap corn when there was no money wherewith to purchase?" Was it not, in fact, better that the workers of Blackburn have "plenty of work, fair wages, and corn at an average price, than that they should be dependent upon the charity of the public?" Finally, on the issue of slavery, Jackson naturally "deplored the system," but he saw no reason why the issue should stand in the way of

British intervention, especially since "for the slaves themselves it would be better, infinitely better, that the North and South should be separated."<sup>5</sup>

Jackson was followed by J. C. Fielden, who evoked "loud cheers" when he said it appeared "monstrous" to reward the South with recognition after it "had brought all this distress" upon them. He then pointed out, again to loud cheers, that there was no provision for the abolition of slavery in the proposed resolutions. Until this was made "the basis of recognition," no working man would be ready even to hear the proposals. He termed the "recognition of the Southern States . . . not only unwise, but absurd."<sup>6</sup>

B. Horbury, a Blackburn worker, stood up and not only seconded the amendment but spoke eloquently in its behalf. As the *Blackburn Standard* reported it, he said:

He had been, for a short time deprived of 30s. per week; and since the commencement of the distress, he had been deprived of 15s. per week, so that it would be a great deal better for him if the contest were brought to an end; but he held that the course proposed would deeply aggravate the mischief. It was very doubtful if the course proposed would bring us cotton, while it was certain to embitter the animosity of the North against us. . . . The real cause of the war was the slave question, and Mason and Slidell, who had been sent to Europe as commissioners from the South, were the very men who were responsible for that abominable measure known as the Fugitive Slave Act, which permitted the use of blood-hounds in the capture of runaway negroes.<sup>7</sup>

After his speech, another amendment was proposed by another Blackburn worker that "the abolition of slavery" be part of any plan for mediation to end the war. Thereupon, Colonel Jackson spoke in favor of the original resolutions without amendment. As to making the abolition of slavery part of any proposed mediation, he felt that it was totally unacceptable and nothing but a scheme to defeat the whole plan for mediation, since it was clear that to attach such a condition would doom any possibility of the South's accepting mediation: "We had no more right to make the existence of slavery in the South a reason for not recognizing their independence, than the connection of any other country with slavery should make us withdraw from all intercourse with it."

The audience, "chiefly composed of working men," vigorously disagreed and, "by a large majority," upheld the principle that no plan for mediation should be proposed which did not include the provision for the abolition of slavery.<sup>8</sup>

The amended resolution represented a real defeat for the pro-Confederate forces, who had hoped that the meeting would reverse the actions of the first gathering. Indeed, the resolutions were not even forwarded to the government, since it was clear, as Colonel Jackson had warned, that by linking the condition of the abolition of slavery to any proposal for mediation, the representatives of the workingmen of Blackburn had doomed any chance that it would even be considered. Yet, in the face of Jackson's warning, the working-class audience had "by a large majority," adopted the amended resolution and rejected the original.<sup>9</sup>

The action at Blackburn was followed by one taken at Stalybridge, a cotton-spinning town in southeast Lancashire, in an area severely affected by the depression in the cotton industry. The meeting, held early in October, 1862, in the Town Hall, had been convened to consider a proposal calling upon Her Majesty to recognize the Confederate States as a means of ending the ruin inflicted upon "the vast population of this district depending upon the cotton trade. . . ." The meeting room was "quickly filled with working men," while "many hundreds" were turned away. The mayor presided, and the meeting had barely gotten under way when a resolution was introduced affirming as the opinion of the meeting the view that the British government would be justified in taking any steps in accordance with the principles of international law, to end the war raging in North America, and thus "arrest, if possible, the indigence and pauperism now closing upon us." The motion was seconded, but it got nowhere. J. Billcliffe, a representative of the weavers, condemned any proposal for intervention "and carried nearly the whole meeting with him." Thereupon, T. Hodson, another weaver, moved as an amendment, "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the distress prevailing in the manufacturing districts is mainly owing to the rebellion of the Southern States against the American constitution." This was immediately seconded, put to a vote, and "was declared carried by an immense majority—something like a hundred to one—amid loud cheers." After this, the meeting adjourned.<sup>10</sup>

The 1862 meetings of workingmen in Lancashire was climaxed by the most famous of them all, the one in Manchester on the eve of the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. (Two similar meetings were held in London that same evening, December 31, 1862.) That day, the *Manchester Guardian* carried the following notice among the advertisements on its front page:

TONIGHT. FREE-TRADE HALL.—  
WORKINGMEN'S MEETING for Union and Freedom, and to prepare an Address to President Lincoln. Chair to be taken at seven o'clock. Members of Committee should be at the Hall at half past five. Doors open at six. J. C. Edwards, Hon. Secretary.

This "obscure little advertisement," Henry W. Lord, United States Consul at Manchester, informed Minister Charles Francis Adams, was also inserted in other Manchester morning papers. These constituted the only notices of the event. It was later learned that "a committee of the workingmen's association had raised the necessary money (£30) and hired the hall for the evening."<sup>11</sup> Fortunately, he added, the fact that the *Manchester Guardian* ("which, on the American question, is a reduced copy of the *Times*")<sup>12</sup> "sneeringly deprecated" the meeting helped to increase both the audience and its enthusiasm.<sup>13</sup> The *Guardian* had conceded that the meeting had been organized independently by the workingmen of Manchester—it described the men who had signed the advertisement on its front page as "two working men"—but warned the workers of the city that they were entering on a dangerous course, since a meeting in favor of the Union might easily bring on a reaction in the form of meetings in behalf of the Confederacy. Therefore, it counseled "that there should be no commencement of the series."<sup>14</sup>

Describing the meeting to Adams, Lord emphasized that "the speeches . . . were mostly from working men"—a fact confirmed by the actual proceedings—and he found all of these workingmen "able and eloquent" speakers. He was especially impressed by "a laborer named Evans"—a reference to Thomas Evans—who, in the course of his speech, aroused applause with his statement: "They might not know what the North was fighting for, but they all knew what the South was fighting for. The great principle of the South was to build a nation based upon slavery and the productions of slavery." Actually, he continued, they did know what the North was fighting for, and he was all for the workers of Manchester to "shake hands with the freedom of the North, and say 'We glory in your Cause.'"<sup>15</sup>

Evans had risen to second the resolution introduced by J. E. Edwards, one of the two Manchester workingmen who had called the meeting, which declared:

That this meeting, recognising the common brotherhood of mankind and the sacred and inalienable right of every human being to personal freedom and equal protection, records its detestation of negro slavery in America, and of the attempts of the rebellious Southern slaveholders to organise on the great American continent a nation having slavery as its basis.<sup>16</sup>

In supporting the resolution, Edwards pointed out that there were "certain classes in this country" who defended the conduct of the Southern slaveholders in seceding from the Union and establishing the Confederate States of America. They had worked hard to convince the workingmen that the cause of the war in America was the arbitrary power of the North, "and to disguise the fact that the South rebelled to conserve, perpetuate, and extend slavery; and that, in fact, slavery was the sole cause of the present civil war." They had also tried to mobilize the workers of Lancashire to support the move "to recognise the South," but in vain. Yet that night, in Manchester's Free Trade Hall, "they had a great meeting, the funds for which were guaranteed by a working men's organisation before the room was engaged." They were meeting, too, "on a spot consecrated to liberty by the blood of their forefathers." (He was referring to the Peterloo Massacre, which is discussed later, pp. 53–54, 106.) That blood lifted up its voice and cried 'Liberty'; and should not their children in manly tones re-echo back 'Liberty'?"<sup>17</sup>

After the resolution was adopted unanimously, Edward Hooson, the other workingman who had called the meeting, moved:

That the meeting composed mainly of the industrial classes of Manchester desires to record its profound sympathy with the efforts of President Lincoln and his colleagues to maintain the American Union in its integrity; and, also its high sense of the justice of his proclamation of emancipation, and other measures tending at once to give freedom to the slave, and restore peace to the American nation.

In supporting the resolution, Hooson explained that he had been moved to sponsor the meeting by the pro-Confederate stand of the *Manchester Guardian*, believing that it did not express the views of the workingmen of

the district, and that he had acted on their behalf since they "desired to set themselves right with the world." He himself had only the highest praise for Abraham Lincoln, regarding him as "a noble spectacle in the history of the world." He could understand why the upper classes of England favored the Confederacy and hated the North. They understood well that if the United States continued to exist as "one consolidated power," its influence would grow, and "it would be too powerful an example for them to be able to resist manhood suffrage." He knew that there were some in England who "wished to see America divided because they thought that country was too powerful. If English statesmen would cease to bully, and would act uprightly, if the press of England would exhibit a little more morality, we should have no need to fear a powerful America."<sup>18</sup>

The second resolution was seconded, put to a vote, and adopted with two or three dissenting voices. After this came the most celebrated act of the meeting—the Address to be sent to President Abraham Lincoln. Expressing joy in the greatness of the United States, "as an outgrowth of England, whose blood and language you share," the Address voiced particular pleasure at the fact that the "Free States" were a "singularly happy abode for the working millions where industry is honoured." One thing only had, in the past, lessened the sympathy of the workers of Manchester with the United States and their "confidence in it—we mean, the ascendancy of politicians who not merely maintained negro slavery, but desired to extend and root it more firmly." But since they had had evidence that the war "which has so sorely distressed us, as well as afflicted you," would definitely "strike off the fetters of the slave," all doubts had vanished, and the Union cause had "attracted our warm and earnest sympathy." They honored Lincoln and the Congress of the United States for the steps already taken to fulfill the belief of the founding fathers that "All men are created equal":

You have procured the liberation of the slaves in the district around Washington, and thereby made the centre of your Federation visibly free. You have enforced the laws against the slave trade; and kept your fleet against it, even while every ship was wanted for service in your terrible war. You have nobly decided to receive ambassadors from the negro republics of Hayti and Liberia, thus forever renouncing that unworthy prejudice which refuses the rights of humanity to man and woman, on account of their colour. In order more effectually to stop the slave trade, you have made with your Queen a treaty which your senate has ratified, for the right of mutual search. Your Congress has decreed freedom, as the law forever, in the vast unoccupied or half-settled territories which are directly subject to its legislative power. It has offered pecuniary aid to all states which will enact emancipation locally and has forbidden your generals to restore fugitive slaves who seek their protection. You have entreated the slave masters to accept those moderate offers; and, after long and patient waiting, you, as Commander in Chief of the army, have appointed tomorrow, the 1st of January, 1863, as the day of unconditional freedom for the slaves of the rebel states. Heartily do we congratulate you and your country on this humane and righteous course.

Nor did the Address stop there. It went on to urge that the course thus far followed be pursued further: "We assume you cannot now stop short of a

complete uprooting of slavery." But not even this was enough. "Justice demands for the black, no less than the whites, the protection of the law—that his voice be heard in your courts." While "enthusiasm is aflame," the work should be completely finished, and "finished effectually. Let no root of bitterness spring up and work fresh misery on our children."

The Address closed on a moving and prophetic note:

Our interests are identified with yours. We are truly one people, though locally separate. And, if you have any ill-wishers here, be assured they are chiefly those who oppose liberty at home, and that they will be powerless to stir up quarrels between us, from the very day in which your country becomes undeniably, and without exception, the home of the free. Accept our high admiration of your firmness in upholding the proclamation of freedom.<sup>19</sup>

This last was a reference to the fact that, despite tremendous pressure from conservatives not to go through with the final issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation, including warnings that it would provoke riots on the part of those in the North who would never countenance the idea of fighting to end slavery, Lincoln had, right up to the very eve of the fateful first of January, 1863, refused to budge from his chosen path.<sup>20</sup>

After the Address had been seconded and adopted unanimously amid cheers, it was moved, seconded, and adopted that the mayor of Manchester, who had been chosen to chair the meeting, be requested to transmit the resolutions and Address to President Lincoln. After this, a man named Jackson, formerly the "negro coachman" of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America, was called to the platform by cries from the audience requesting that he be heard. He came forward and addressed the meeting, and "thanked the audience for their sympathy with the negro." At twenty minutes past eleven o'clock, the historic meeting adjourned.<sup>21</sup>

On February 9, 1863, U. S. Minister Charles Francis Adams forwarded Lincoln's reply, dated January 19. After explaining that his fundamental aim after being inaugurated had been "to maintain and preserve at once the Constitution and integrity of the Federal Republic," Lincoln indicated that because of his conviction that "the past action and influence of the United States was generally regarded as having been beneficial toward mankind," he had anticipated a policy of "forbearance" from the nations of the world. Especially had he expected that the United States "would encounter no hostile influence on the part of Great Britain." In this he had not been disappointed. Then followed one of Lincoln's most famous statements:

I know, and deeply deplore, the suffering which the workingmen at Manchester, and in all Europe, are called to endure in this crisis. It has been often and studiously represented that the attempt to overthrow this Government, which was built upon the foundation of human rights, and to substitute for it one which should rest exclusively on the basis of human slavery, was likely to obtain the favor of Europe. Through the action of our disloyal citizens, the workingmen of Europe have been subjected to severe trial, for the purpose of forcing their sanction to that attempt. Under these circumstances, I cannot but regard your decisive utterances upon the question as an instance of sublime

Christian heroism, which has not been surpassed in any age or in any country. It is indeed an energetic and reinspiring assurance of the inherent power of truth, and of the ultimate and universal triumph of justice, humanity and freedom....<sup>22</sup>

The Free-Trade Hall meeting had wide repercussions, both in England and abroad. The Address to Lincoln and the president's reply were reprinted throughout the United States, and a pamphlet, published in Manchester by the Union and Emancipation Society, entitled *The Working Men of Manchester and President Lincoln*, was widely reprinted in working-class circles. The pamphlet introduced the Address to President Lincoln with the notice that it had been "unanimously adopted at a Public Meeting, convened by working men," that the "large Hall was crowded with an enthusiastic audience of six thousand persons, principally of the working classes," and that among the speakers who addressed the meeting were "six working men," all facts verified by reports in the contemporary British press. Also included in the pamphlet was a reprint of an editorial in the *New York Tribune* as typical of the reaction of the majority of pro-Union newspapers of the United States. The *Tribune* editorial began: "It is remarkable that while the sympathies of the aristocratic, and, to a considerable extent, of the middle—especially the commercial—classes in England have been given from the beginning of the war to the rebels, the working men have generally stood by the cause of the Union and of Freedom." It continued:

The voice which comes from the recent meeting of the working men of Manchester is another evidence of the genuine sympathy with our cause which pervades this class.

The *Tribune* noted that while the "working men of Manchester" were elated by the successive acts of the Lincoln administration which reached "their natural and inevitable culminating point in the Proclamation of Emancipation," they did not stop there: "They assume that he [Lincoln] cannot now stop short of a complete uprooting of slavery, and they remind him of certain broad principles of humanity which they believe must guide his course in the future." These suggestions for future action to wipe out every vestige of slavery in the states thus far exempted from the effects of the Proclamation, and the call for the extension to the slaves, when liberated, "of some of the most sacred rights of humanity, which slavery has always disregarded and outraged," made the Address of the Manchester working-men especially significant. "We trust that it is not too much to hope that this voice will be heeded by the President," the *Tribune*'s editorial concluded.<sup>23</sup>

The editorial response in England to the Manchester meeting was less enthusiastic, although no less significant. The London *Daily News*, like the *New York Tribune*, observed that the "Manchester workmen were not content to dwell in abstractions," and urged all its readers to study the Address to Lincoln carefully—it reprinted it twice—in order to understand the real issues involved in the Civil War. "And let all," it closed its leader, entitled "Voice of British Workingmen," "who have labored to glorify the Slave Power, the most monstrous outgrowth of the modern world, read it, and see how vain have been their efforts to corrupt the minds of the working

masses, and how wide a gulf is fixed between them and the great body of the people."<sup>24</sup>

The *Manchester Examiner and Times* also noted that the meeting, "composed mainly of the industrial classes of Manchester," was not content to praise President Lincoln for what had already been accomplished in the battle against slavery, but urged him "not to be faint" in his "providential mission," but rather "to go forward" to that "glorious consummation" by eradicating slavery in every part of the United States.<sup>25</sup> Most of the long leader in the *Manchester Guardian* said nothing about the stand taken at the meeting, but was devoted instead to the manner in which Abel Heywood, mayor of Manchester, was chosen to chair it. According to the report in its own pages, the mayor was suddenly called out of the audience to assume the chair by J. C. Edwards and Edward Hoosen, the two workingmen who organized the meeting.<sup>26</sup> (This is also the way Henry W. Lord described the selection of the mayor in his dispatch to Minister Adams.)<sup>27</sup> But to the *Guardian*, it did not seem possible that it could have occurred so simply, and several paragraphs of its leader were devoted to implying that it had all been arranged in advance to make it appear that the choice was a spontaneous one. (What the significance of all this was, was not spelled out.) Sudden, too, according to the *Guardian*, was the whole idea of giving voice to the sentiments of the Manchester workingmen on the issues involved in the American war. Up to that point, according to the *Guardian*, there had been only a desire "to maintain a rigid abstinence from political action in harmony with the attitude taken by the Government." Now all this was changed, and it would be "shouted far and wide" that the workingmen of Manchester, at a public meeting presided over by the mayor, had "unanimously voted . . . sympathy with the North in an Address to President Lincoln." The paper's only consolation lay in the fact that the way had been opened for "counter-demonstrations."

Finally, the *Guardian* made it clear that nothing said at the meeting or in the Address to Lincoln had caused it to alter its attitude on the war. It could not share the meeting's enthusiasm for the acts against slavery already taken by Lincoln: "We have it from Mr. Lincoln's own lips and pen that he does not desire to abolish slavery except as a means of extraction from the difficulties of his government and that he would willingly maintain it, if for no other reason than for the accomplishment of his political ends." (How anyone could make anything out of this utterance is difficult to understand.) As for the people of the North, the *Guardian* knew that, except for a small party of abolitionists, they were "so far from having any antipathy to slavery that they consider it the natural condition of the negro, and are well content to profit by it." So if the workers of Manchester wished to continue to delude themselves in the belief that the war was tending toward freedom for the blacks, that was their privilege. But they could not logically complain if those who knew the real truth of what was at stake in the American war would organize their own demonstrations to enlighten the public.<sup>28</sup>

The *Guardian's* reaction was echoed in the *Oldham Standard*, although,

unlike the Manchester papers, the Oldham daily questioned whether the Free-Trade Hall meeting was an "expression of the sentiments of the working classes of Lancashire." However, the only reason it could advance for doubting it was the weak and fallacious argument: "Our operatives have all the way through held themselves aloof from all part in the American controversy. They saw from the beginning that it was a subject which they were not called upon to discuss. They have sided with neither North nor South." Evidently the *Oldham Standard* had never heard of the meetings held in the summer and early fall of 1862 in Blackburn and Stalybridge. Now, it lamented, the situation was all changed. All over America, all over England, the news would spread like wildfire that "Manchester, the centre of the populous cotton manufacturing districts, has made common cause with the republicans of the Northern States and expressed its ardent hope that the aristocratic South may be speedily crushed." Like the *Guardian*, the *Standard* found one consolation in this unhappy development: "It will pave the way for further agitation, and agitation in any shape will do good just now."<sup>29</sup>

"This meeting is likely to make quite as much noise amongst us here in Lancashire as it will on the other side of the Atlantic," predicted the *Oldham Standard* in listing the dangers emanating from the gathering at the Free-Trade Hall.<sup>30</sup> It was an accurate prediction. While few Lancashire papers reprinted the full proceedings of the meeting, most carried the entire text or excerpts from the Address to Lincoln and Lincoln's reply.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, as the Liverpool *Daily Post* reported on January 17, 1863: "The meeting of the working classes in Manchester has been followed by similar meetings elsewhere."<sup>32</sup> At these meetings, again and again, speakers like a Mr. Evans at Liverpool, described as a "working man," emphasized that "it was the duty of the working men to oppose slavery," and he concluded by saying "to the North, 'Onward, onward, Ye sons of progress,' and to the South, 'Downwards, downwards, ye slaveowners.' "<sup>33</sup> A speaker at Leeds congratulated the workingmen of that city that "they and their brethren in Lancashire had never, for an instant, asked for any recognition of the Southern States." On the contrary, "for every nobleman, for every man who has a title before his name, who has taken the side of the South, there have been 10, 20, and even 100 hard-working men who have taken the side of the North and freedom." Above all, there was the voice of the workers of Manchester,

. . . and I do say it will be ungenerous of America to remember anything against England when we can point to that large meeting of half-starved workingmen of Manchester, in the Free-Trade Hall, when they took the lead in saying, no matter what the suffering we may endure, no matter what the sacrifices we may have to undergo, we will not allow our Government to depart from the strict principle of neutrality on behalf of the slaveholding Confederacy.<sup>34</sup>

## 5. The *George Griswold*

During the Free-Trade Hall meeting in Manchester, one of the speakers (Bailey, M. P.) was reported to have declared to cheers that "there had been no meetings in the South to assist the unemployed operatives in Lancashire; but there had been enthusiastic meetings with that object in New York."<sup>1</sup> Two days earlier, on December 27, 1862, in a speech at the Chester Music hall entitled "The Working Classes and the Cotton Crisis," William E. Gladstone had also aroused the applause of his working-class audience when he said: "America, in the agony of mortal conflict, has generously aided the funds for the relief of the Lancashire distress."<sup>2</sup>

It all began with the *New York Times*. In September, 1862, the *Times* sent a special reporter into Lancashire ("the district which suffers more by the war than any portion of America") to ascertain in exact detail the effects of the "cotton famine." The reporter sent the *Times* a chilling picture of vast numbers of manufacturing operatives "reduced to pauperism, naked and starving but for the relief doled out to them. They must be warmed as well as fed. Long since they have pawned their clothing and blankets. They lie upon the floor." They had hoped that the war would soon end, or that sufficient cotton would come from India or elsewhere. "Today they are told that the war in America must last for many months, and probably for years, and that no cotton is coming from any quarter."<sup>3</sup>

In subsequent issues, the *New York Times* filled in the details of the somber picture under such headings as "The Distress in Lancashire," "Terrible Effects of the Cotton Famine in England," "Quarter of a Million of People in One District Out of Work and Living on Charity," "Facts, Figures and Incidents of the Suffering," "Details of the Numbers Unemployed and the Consequent Distress in the Towns and Unions of Lancashire."<sup>4</sup> But the *Times* did not confine itself to merely reporting the details of the tragedy. On November 8, 1862, its lead editorial was headed "Our Friends in England—A Practical Suggestion." It is worth quoting at length from this important editorial:

Who are our friends in England? Has the struggling Union *any* friendly recognition in that country, which we used fondly to designate our mother-country? Not certainly among its rulers; for not a kindly word, nothing but cold formalities, mingled with insidious insults, have come to us from them since the

fearful war broke out. Not among the aristocracy and governing classes; for they see in our great struggle only a strife of vulgar democrats, fighting for we know not what. Not in Parliament. Not among the snobs, flunkies and shopkeepers, which form so large an element in British society; for they merely reflect the opinions, as they ape the manners, of those whom they consider their "bettereds." Not in the Press; for have not the columns of almost every journal in England been perpetually foul with abuse of us? Have they not heaped every conceivable insult upon us, and applied to us every degrading epithet, and accused us of every atrocious crime, until our blood boiled with desire of vengeance against our maligners? Not in Oxford; for did not its halls on a late public occasion ring with cheers for JEFF DAVIS and with groans and hisses upon President LINCOLN and the cause of the North. Not from the hierarchy, nor the pulpit, nor the clubs, nor the drawing-rooms—not even from the Anti-Slavery party or Exeter Hall have we received the common justice and consideration which savages might claim. Nearly every voice from every class in England has been the voice of hatred and scorn, and of a base malignity and injustice of which we had hardly supposed human nature to be capable.

Yet we have friends in England; the North, the Union, the cause of Freedom have friends there. Friends who have uttered their deep sympathy in our behalf—though they may have no voice in Parliament, no representatives in the Press, though they cannot make or unmake Cabinets, and though their influence in deciding questions of national or international policy is less than nothing. Our friends and there could be no grander tribute paid to the genius of the Republic—are the dumb masses.

Actually, the *Times* itself demonstrated that these masses were not so "dumb," for it cited meetings held by the workers of Lancashire where they voiced their support of the American Union and for noninterference: "Only the other day we gave an account of the unemployed and suffering workmen in Stalybridge, who expressed themselves strongly against the slaveholding rebels, and in favor of the Constitution of America." The meeting, of course, was the one held early in October, 1862, which we have discussed above.

Then came the "Practical Suggestion":

We suggest whether it would not be well for the American people to give some substantial expression of the sympathy entertained for these, our only friends in England, in their days of terrible distress. For terrible, indeed, their sufferings now are. The accounts which reach us from Lancashire, and other manufacturing districts, of the prevailing and spreading want, famine and suffering, are heart-rending. The number of unemployed persons now receiving charitable relief, in Lancashire alone, is close upon two hundred thousand. The amount of wages of which the poor of the district are deprived, by the stoppage of the mills, is over half a million dollars a week. But figures can give no conception whatever of the extent and depth of the pervading want. Every week, now, too, it becomes worse. The applicants for relief increase in awful ratio. The cold, dismal, dreaded winter is upon them, and it seems almost hopeless to try to keep thousands from positive starvation.

Others had already helped; the colonies had sent contributions. "But all is insufficient. The distress still grows, and more aid is called for":

Would it not be a magnificent thing for the people of these States, even in this, our great day of national trial, to send these our poor friends in England a contribution—to offer them a shipload of corn and wheat out of the God-given bounties of our land? Our country is rent by an unprecedented war, but it could spare a gift of a shipload of produce. And we cannot believe that the Confederate pirates which the English have let loose upon our commerce would burn or sink any of these bounty ships. Send over the ship with the American flag at its peak, and let its benefactions be bestowed upon our suffering and famine-stricken friends with a bounteous hand.

At present we simply throw out the suggestion for the consideration of the Chamber of Commerce, the Com Exchange, and the open-handed merchants of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and other cities. Its bearing upon many questions will be discovered by everyone. Would it not be worth while to act upon it?

Exactly a month later, the *Times* reported that its suggestion had been "widely taken up and approved of." The press of all the major cities in the North had endorsed the proposal, as had various public bodies and societies. Chambers of Commerce, in particular, had met to collect funds for the relief purposes.<sup>5</sup>

A committee composed mainly of New York City merchants, acting in conjunction with similar bodies in other cities, issued "An Appeal for the Suffering Operatives of Great Britain." It urgently recommended that citizens of every city, town, and village throughout the Union:

... call public meetings, and appoint committees to collect and remit moneys and food to Committees on the seaboard; and . . . the clergy of all denominations at once . . . bring the subject before their congregations, and . . . take up collections that, all, according to their ability, may unite in this truly Christian work.

The "Appeal" concluded with the announcement that as a result of the liberality of Messrs. N. L. & G. Griswold, a new ship of eighteen hundred tons' capacity had been placed at the committee's disposal to transmit the provisions received.<sup>6</sup>

On January 9, 1863, the new, 200-foot-long *George Griswold*, loaded with "gifts of food for the famished operatives of Lancashire," was towed down the Bay of New York. As she moved down the Bay, she was saluted by several British vessels in the harbor, as well as by "the most vociferous cheers" of spectators on shore. From the bow floated the Union Jack, while the Stars and Stripes waved from the gaff. Her cargo consisted of 13,236 barrels of flour; 102 boxes of bacon; 50 pounds and 50 barrels of pork; 167 bags and 500 barrels of corn; 315 boxes and 125 barrels of bread; 50 barrels of wheat; and 3 tierces and 2 bags of rice.

Speeches were delivered on the deck and thanks were given "to the noble charity of the stevedores who had voluntarily loaded the ship without charge." They had, it was pointed out, contributed to the cargo, as had other workers, and, in addition, had provided "their liberal donation of time, which to them is money." A letter was read from an unnamed member of the British

Parliament, who assured the American people that the "working class of England" believed, even if not always clearly, that "the cause of the North is their cause." But since the working class of Britain did not have "a great political influence . . . , inasmuch as they have no votes," he and others friendly to the North had always feared that the British government "would join in some act of intervention with a view to obtain the much-needed cotton." Fortunately, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had indicated even to many skeptics that the war was clearly assuming the "character of freedom versus slavery," and the more it became so, the less was the chance of intervention on the side of the Confederacy: "Once let it be evident that the great majority of the North are resolved that they will never reconstruct the union on the basis of a compromise with slavery, and you have secured the sympathy of England."<sup>7</sup>

During the two months before the *Griswold* sailed, money for a shipload of provisions to be sent to England had been raised, and there were \$30,000 left in the Chamber of Commerce committee's treasury, not to mention the large sums in the hands of two other relief organizations in New York City. This money would be used to send additional ships. Indeed, within a few weeks, another "relief ship," the *Achilles*, left Philadelphia with 5,000 barrels of flour for the distressed operatives of Lancashire, followed shortly thereafter by the *Hope*.<sup>8</sup> While merchants and brokers had contributed generously to the relief ships, a good part of the funds raised came from small contributions sent to the New York Committee by workers and farmers.<sup>9</sup>

All of this was being reported in England, too. "American Sympathy with the Lancashire Operatives" was a common heading in papers ranging from the *Bee-Hive* in London to the *Leeds Mercury*.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, a number of Lancashire papers reprinted the "Appeal for the Suffering Operatives of Great Britain," directed to the American people by the Relief Committee in New York City. Some papers, usually friendly to the Confederacy, could not refrain from commenting that there was no news of an "Appeal for the Suffering Operatives of Great Britain" from any part of the Confederate States of America. Since blockade-running was already making some Southerners quite wealthy, a relief ship could be sent with reasonable expectation that it would reach the suffering operatives.<sup>11</sup>

The *George Griswold* tied up at Liverpool on February 11, 1863, with its provisions valued at £27,000 and donations in cash of £1,333—in today's terms it could be reckoned at about ten times these amounts. All of the men employed at the docks, from customs officials to porters and stevedores, refused payment for their services, while the railways offered free transport.<sup>12</sup>

Even before the *George Griswold* landed at Liverpool, meetings were held in Leeds and Rochdale, attended mainly by workingmen, to express thanks to the American people for the approaching vessel.<sup>13</sup> On February 13, 1863, the following notice appeared in the advertising columns of the *Liverpool Daily Post*:

DISTRESS IN THE MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS.  
On MONDAY next, the 16th instant, an ADDRESS (prepared by the

Chamber of Commerce) will be presented to the COMMANDER of the ship *GEORGE GRISWOLD* recently arrived from New York with Provisions for the Distressed Operatives, in the Concertroom, St. George's Hall, at One o'clock, when the attendance of the Mercantile Community and the Public is invited.

Before the ceremony was over, the small concert room of St. George's Hall was filled by both the "élite and the working classes of the town, the gallery being reserved for the ladies."<sup>14</sup> The chair was occupied by E. A. Macfie, president of the Chamber of Commerce, who addressed Captain Lunt of the *George Griswold* at length. The gist of his remarks was that the British people regretted the current difficulties of the United States and hoped that peace would soon enable the American people to devote themselves to the cultivation of their soil and an increase of their commercial prosperity. Liverpool was especially interested in such an outcome, since her trade with the United States had formerly averaged £150,000 per month. After more speeches, Captain Lunt and Rev. Mr. Denison, chaplain of the *George Griswold*, responded, each expressing gratification at the warmth of the reception and assuring the audience that the cargo they had brought to Liverpool and the feelings which led to its shipment "were a true representation of the attitude of the people of the United States toward the British nation and their appreciation of the support they had received from the working class in particular." In this connection, Captain Lunt said he wished "especially to eulogise the conduct of the stevedores, the coopers, and the boatmen, who had worked gratuitously in discharging the cargo."<sup>15</sup>

So packed was the crowd in Manchester's Free-Trade Hall on February 24, 1863 to welcome the officers and crew of the *George Griswold*, that an overflow meeting was held for the 2,000 who could not get in, making it "one of the greatest gatherings ever witnessed in the Hall."<sup>16</sup> The chairman, J. R. Cooper, and several speakers made it clear that the meeting was a logical sequel to the great Free-Trade Hall meeting of December 31, 1862, a meeting that took place on the "eve of a bright dawn of freedom to the negro slave." Out of that meeting had been born the Union and Emancipation Society, under whose auspices the present gathering was being held. The Society had widely publicized both the Address to President Lincoln and his reply, and it was only fitting that the Lincoln reply to the workers of Manchester should be read to the present gathering.

Lincoln's letter was read twice—once to the audience in the Hall and then to the thousands outside. Then two other documents were read twice—the resolution and the Address. The first stated:

That this public meeting desires to express its heartfelt gratitude to the noble donors in America, who, in the midst of a dire domestic struggle for freedom and nationality, have so generously contributed to the succour of the operatives of Lancashire; and the meeting declares its conviction that no amount of privation will induce the people of the cotton districts to sanction any recognition of a Confederacy based upon the doctrine that it is right for man to hold property in man.

The Address to the commander, chaplain, and officers of the *George Griswold* expressed, "on behalf of the working population of this district" and the community generally, "the most heartfelt gratitude" for the ship's visit, and declared:

Be assured that we are not unaffected observers of the momentous struggle in your great country. Our sympathies are entirely and unalterably with the friends of freedom, and we earnestly desire the maintenance of the Union, on the basis of emancipation and constitutional liberty for all men of every creed, colour, and race.<sup>16</sup>

The resolution and Address were cheered and endorsed by several speakers. Two were Manchester workingmen. One of them, T. Evans, remarked that "the working men of Manchester had long ago shaken hands with the Americans, and they were most happy to shake hands with the crew of the *George Griswold*." The other, Joseph Barlow, insisted, according to the report of the meeting, that:

... the rights of labour and the honour of industry were involved in the struggle in America. The Americans were not merely contending for themselves, but for the rights of the unenfranchised of this and every other country. If the North succeeded, liberty would be stimulated and encouraged in every country on the face of the earth; if they failed, despotism, like a great pall, would envelop all our social and political institutions.<sup>17</sup>

The final speaker to endorse the resolution and Address was the great Chartist leader, Ernest Jones, who enjoyed an almost unparalleled reputation and following in British working-class circles.<sup>18</sup> He pointed out that propagandists for the Confederacy had charged that the purpose of the relief ship was to "win over" working-class support for the Union. "But," Jones cried to wild applause, "erc one pound's worth of food was shipped or collected, the voice of the working men of England went forth in a cry of sympathy to the North, and of ratification of the principles of liberty." After derisively exposing one after another proslavery argument raised to rally British working-class support for the Confederacy, he noted that they raised still another argument—the argument of their self-interest, saying:

"Break the blockade that you may get the cotton and recognise the South that you may keep up the supply".... But what was the response? (*Cheers*) Not of the lord-mayors of London—(*groans*)—but of the workingmen of England, it was something so heroic and sublime. The people had said there was something higher than work, more precious than cotton, more glorious, indeed, than a satisfied stomach—it was right, and liberty, and doing justice, and bidding defiance to all wrong (*cheers*).<sup>19</sup>

The final speaker was Reverend Mr. Denison, chaplain of the *George Griswold*. Since neither the captain of the *Griswold* nor that of the *Achilles*, who arrived during the meeting, felt able to address the audience, Reverend Denison spoke for the captains and crews. He told the gathering that to all on the two relief vessels:

... that which delighted them the most, which gave their country and their country's cause their chief honour was the welcome they received that night from the hard-handed and brave-hearted working men and working women of Lancashire. (*Loud applause*).... It was pleasing for the Americans of the Northern states to know, as they did know by what had come to them through official documents, that their national rights would be respected (*loud cheers*), but it was most pleasing of all to have that backed up by the throb of the great heart of the labouring classes of England (*cheers*).<sup>20</sup>

After the resolutions and Address had been unanimously endorsed at both the indoor and the overflow outdoor meeting, the latter under lamplight, the chairman closed the gathering by calling for continued support of workingmen for the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester, promising that "that society, made up mainly of workingmen, would aid in accomplishing much more than the restoration of the American Union," and further that it "would aid in enfranchising black labour in America and . . . in enfranchising white labour in England." This prospect for the future closed the meeting amid "great cheering."<sup>21</sup>

Reports of the meetings in Lancashire greeting the relief ships received considerable attention in the Northern press in the United States. The resolutions and addresses of the various meetings were reprinted, including the Address of the "distressed operatives of Blackburn," which opened:

That your memorialists feel grateful for the kindness and sympathy shown toward them in their present deplorable condition, and they earnestly pray that the civil war now, unhappily raging amongst you—and which your memorialists deeply lament—may come to a speedy termination in favor of freedom, regardless of race or colour. The subscriptions raised in New York for the relief of Lancashire distress have done much to undeceive many who had been misled by the enemies of popular government as to the exact state of public feeling in the United States toward their brethren in England. In the midst of the unhappy strife, now spreading devastation and death among you, you have not forgotten the starving operatives of Lancashire, who are innocent sufferers.<sup>22</sup>

Two years afterwards, Jonathan Fincher, editor and publisher of *Fincher's Trades' Review*, the leading labor paper in the United States published during the Civil War, recalled that he had been in England "in connection with the benevolent mission of the Relief Ship *George Griswold*, with food for the suffering and noble martyr-operatives of Lancashire." He remembered being at the Free-Trade Hall meeting in Manchester, part of the "six thousand of the workingmen and women of England" gathered to honor the crew and captain of the relief ship, and was deeply impressed by the fact that the meeting of so many thousands of British workers was held on the very spot of the Peterloo Massacre, "the great massacre of the sons and daughters of Labor at Manchester, by the armed hirelings of Capital." For on the very site of the massacre stood the Free-Trade Hall, and the sons and daughters of the men and women massacred at Peterloo were voicing their support for the victory of "free labor in America and Labor Reform in England," and their

understanding that the two issues were intertwined. After that, he traveled to other cities and was "much among the workingmen of Lancashire." Everywhere, he found a strong conviction that victory for the North was a victory for the working class—for the black workers in the South held in the chains of slavery, and for the British workers seeking to secure the right to vote. This accounted for their willingness to endure privation for the cause of freedom in America. This consciousness on the part of the Lancashire workingmen of what was at stake in the Civil War had deeply moved him, and had led him to complete arrangements by which the readers of his publication would receive regular reports of the progress of labor in England. On his return home, he lost no time "to commend them [the British workingmen] warmly to the workingmen of America."<sup>23</sup>

## 6. The Voice of London

Two meetings of the workingmen of London had been held on December 31, 1862, which expressed support for the Union, denounced the Confederacy, and praised the Emancipation Proclamation. One of the meetings declared:

... that any unsolicited interference on the part of the British Government with the United States of America would be both unjust and impolitic—and that such an act would be looked upon by the whole civilised world as an unprovoked outrage committed on the citizens of the American Union, and a flagrant violation of international law.

The other meeting had adopted an Address to President Lincoln which rejected "with indignation" the "slander" that British workers sympathized in any respect with "a rebellion of slaveholders," and concluded:

We have watched with the warmest interest the steady advance of your policy along the path of emancipation; and on this eve of the day on which your proclamation of freedom takes place, we pray God to strengthen your hands, to confirm your noble purpose and to hasten the restoration of that lawful authority which engages, in peace or war, by compensation or by force of arms, to realize the glorious principle on which your constitution is founded—the brotherhood, freedom, and equality of all men.<sup>1</sup>

As the *Bee-Hive* pointed out, these meetings were held "simultaneously with . . . a similar meeting . . . at Manchester, in the Free-Trade Hall," and they were overshadowed by the Lancashire meeting, its Address to Lincoln, and the president's reply. The same can be said of a meeting sponsored by the Edinburgh Trades Council.

In Scotland, the working-class press (along with the Liberal and Tory press) supported the South. Yet when, in February, 1863, the Edinburgh Emancipation Society composed of members who were former Chartists or Presbyterian clergymen, requested the Edinburgh Trades' Council (the only Scottish Trades Council then functioning)<sup>2</sup> to organize "a thoroughly working man's meeting" in order to mobilize mass working-class support for Lincoln and the North, the Council was at first divided on whether to support the North or the South. Finally, however, by a vote of eight to six, it decided that the "thoroughly working man's meeting" should support President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>3</sup>

A "successful working-class meeting"<sup>14</sup> was held in a large hall in Edinburgh on February 19, 1863. The proceedings reveal that, despite some opposition, the overwhelming sentiment of this meeting "of the working classes" of Edinburgh expressed full approval of the emancipation policy of Lincoln and urged the president to carry it out in all parts of the United States, so that "freedom may be given to every slave throughout the entire Union."<sup>15</sup> The most extensive speech in favor of this stand was given by Bone, president of the Edinburgh Trades' Council, and he immediately evoked applause when he said that "the working men of Edinburgh . . . could have no sympathy, no communion, and no fellowship with slaveholders." A cry had been raised, he continued, that England should recognize the South, and then he went on:

We did recognise them; we recognised them as acquaintances, but not as friends—(*a laugh*)—as the men who had for forty years ruled the mighty continent of North America, and who had never let slip an opportunity of browbeating, insulting, and bamboozling us. (*Hear, hear,* and *cheers*.) We recognised Jefferson Davis as the Mississippi fire-eater—(*laughter, hisses, and cheers*)—and we recognised Mr. Mason as the author of the Fugitive Slave Bill. (*Hear, hear*) We recognised the whole nation as a gang of conspirators—(*hisses and cheers*)—who trampled on the most inviolable rights of the people, who robbed the labourer of his reward, and labour of its dignity—(*cheers*)—who robbed God of his image and left standing in all its hideousness the relation of master and slave (*cheers*).<sup>16</sup>

The fact that the meeting sponsored by the Edinburgh Trades' Council took the pro-Union stand it did was not only a repudiation of the pro-Confederate Scottish labor press. It also, as James D. Young has pointed out, had a great impact on the future of both republicanism and the labor movement in Scotland. Republicanism had an "important bearing on the ideological development of the Scottish labor movement in the 1870s," and it was "inspired by working-class commitment to Lincoln's emancipation policy."<sup>17</sup>

The outstanding event in British labor circles during the spring of 1863 was the great pro-Union demonstration in St. James' Hall, organized by the London Trades' Council, made up of the trade union leaders of England's metropolis. This is the meeting, with John Bright in the chair, to which Royden Harrison quite properly attaches so much importance, describing it as:

... the most memorable of all those held in support of the North. It was widely referred to as providing conclusive evidence as to where working-class sympathies lay; it was of decisive value in persuading trade union leaders of the value of political action, and it enabled them to score a triumph at the expense of George Potter, who was badly compromised by his association with the Confederate sympathiser and first editor of the *Bee-Hive*, George Troup.<sup>18</sup>

Oddly enough, the fact that the *Bee-Hive*, even though no longer under Troup, continued to view the Emancipation Proclamation with contempt actually helped bring about the great meeting. This was particularly true in

the case of its publication on February 14, 1863, without editorial rebuke, of a lengthy letter, "Mr. Lincoln and the Slave Proclamation," by T. J. Dunning, in which the writer listed eleven reasons why the Emancipation Proclamation had to be rejected as a factor demanding British working-class support for the Union cause. Dunning cited as support for his position the fact that the proclamation was issued under pressure as a military measure; that it would be "as nugatory as the Pope's Bull against the Comet"; and that it only affected the rebels whose slaves were to be confiscated, while those of the "loyal citizens" were, it was recommended, to be emancipated "by purchase." In short, the Proclamation had ruled out of the terms of emancipation all slave areas where Federal troops were present, that is, in Louisiana, Virginia, and the Border States. The Proclamation, moreover, would only lead to the "complete severance" of the Union beyond the possibility of recall," since the arming of the slaves as Union soldiers, which was authorized under the Proclamation, would make "the gulf between the North and South . . . wider and wider." Another result would be "an insurrection of the slaves" within the Confederacy. "Logically," wrote Dunning, "the Proclamation means a St. Domingo affair and nothing else, wherever practicable," and just as the black revolution in the French West Indies had led to the massacre of whites, so, too, would Lincoln's Proclamation. This, in turn, would render restoration of the Union that much less possible, and strengthen the proslavery element in the North. Taken altogether, according to Dunning, it became clear "how little the negro has to hope for in the Proclamation."<sup>19</sup>

Since Dunning, a former Chartist and head of the Bookbinders, was "the most respected and articulate representative of the older generation of trade unionists who were active in London during the Civil War," and the *Bee-Hive* was still the official organ of the London Trades' Council,<sup>20</sup> many of the newer trade union leaders felt that unless they were answered, the true attitude of the London trade unions toward the war would be misrepresented. The result was the St. James' Hall meeting. But just who initiated the meeting is the subject of some controversy. Henry Adams, who was present at the meeting in place of his father, the United States Minister, was convinced that Karl Marx was its chief organizer, a position which a number of historians since then have tended to support.<sup>21</sup> But this has been dismissed by Royden Harrison as patently ridiculous. He credits only one man with being responsible—Edward Spencer Beesly, professor of political economy at University College of the University of London, a radical Positivist who was on friendly terms with Marx, and who nearly lost his professorship at University College because of his sturdy defense of trade union principles.<sup>22</sup>

Interestingly enough, Harrison also bases his claim on behalf of Beesly on Henry Adams, for he cites as his evidence the comment in *The Education of Henry Adams*, written half a century after the event, where Adams wrote that the meeting at St. James' Hall "was the result of Professor Beesly's patient efforts to unite Bright and the trade unions on an American platform."<sup>23</sup>

In *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Class*, published in 1960 on behalf of the London Trades' Council, J. R. Poole makes no mention of Beesly as the organizer of the meeting. He does, however, write:

The trade societies were in general barred by their constitutions from taking part in political agitation. But members of the Junta [representing the new trade union leaders] working in close consultation with Marx, were anxious to use the organisation of the societies to call together a great meeting on the American question—a distinctively working-class demonstration of solidarity with the North, avowedly, if not technically, held under the auspices of the trade unions.<sup>14</sup>

The truth is that Beesly himself made no claim at the time of having organized the meeting. On the contrary, he wrote in the *Bee-Hive*: "It has been pretty well known for some weeks among the trade societies of the metropolis, that efforts were being made by some of their own members to get up a meeting in support of Negro Emancipation."<sup>15</sup> But he does make it clear that one of the purposes<sup>15</sup> the meeting was to achieve a reconciliation between the trade unionists and John Bright, the staunchest champion of the North in Parliament and long an advocate of the extension of the suffrage at home. Bright, who came from a mill-owning family and was himself a mill owner and the representative of the small manufacturers of Birmingham in Parliament, had antagonized the trade unions by his (and Cobden's) obstructionism in such matters as factory legislation, and by his open hostility during crucial strike struggles. Skeptical of trade unions, he was convinced that the grievances of the workers could be resolved entirely by the cooperative movement. To add to all this, Bright in January, 1862 had opposed establishing a committee to help the poor in Rochdale, arguing at a time of widespread misery that "people should not get the idea that they could spend all in periods of prosperity and then go on poor relief."<sup>16</sup>

But on the issue of support for the Lincoln government, Bright, a Quaker opponent of slavery and an advocate of the spread of political democracy and republican institutions, and the British trade unionists, whose direction he had up to that time opposed, saw eye-to-eye. Either Marx or Beesly (or both) could have made the suggestion for united action on the question of support for the Lincoln administration. Despite the scorn he had for Bright's principles, Marx would certainly have urged the leaders of the London Trades' Council to invite Bright to chair the meeting to support the North. (Since Marx had great contempt for George Potter, he would have been only too happy to see his stand on the war repudiated.) Of course, Beesly, too, would have been interested in bringing about the reconciliation.<sup>17</sup>

Royden Harrison insists, too, that it "was only with great difficulty that Beesly was able" to persuade some of the London trade union leaders to organize the meeting.<sup>18</sup> He cites Henry Adams's report to the State Department as his sole source, but a reading of this report reveals that nowhere does the secretary to the American Minister make this claim.<sup>19</sup> It is true that T. J. Dunning tried to prevent the St. James' Hall meeting from taking place with the old cry of "no politics in the trade union movement," and with a diatribe against Bright. But he does not seem to have gotten anywhere. For, as a leading trade unionist, writing under the pseudonym of "Scourge," put it:

Now, I am no admirer of Messrs. Bright or Cobden in a general way, or of the school to which they are supposed to belong,<sup>20</sup> but I like justice to be meted

out to all men. I believe Messrs. Cobden and Bright to be honorably sincere in their desire to see the working classes in possession of the franchise, and in any endeavours they may make to obtain it for them; and, believing this, I feel disposed to look with a lenient eye on their shortcomings in many other respects.<sup>21</sup>

So the trade union leaders invited Bright to chair and address the rally to be held in St. James' Hall on March 26, 1863, and Bright agreed. Tickets were distributed free by the trade unions among their members for:

A GREAT MEETING  
of the Trades' Unionists of London. . . .  
For the purposes of expressing sympathy  
with the Northern States of America,  
and in favour of  
NEGRO EMANCIPATION  
JOHN BRIGHT, ESQ., M.P. WILL  
PRESIDE.<sup>22</sup>

The demand for tickets was tremendous, and when the meeting began promptly at 8 P.M., between 2,500 and 3,000 were in the Hall, "all, with the exception of a few invited guests, the members of the working classes, or technically skilled laborers."<sup>23</sup>

Bright led off by linking the two great issues: Northern victory and parliamentary reform. "Privilege thinks it has a great interest in it [the contest in America]," he said, "and every morning with blatant voice it comes into our street and curses the American Republic. (*Cheers*)."  
He continued:

Privilege has beheld an afflicting spectacle for many years past. It has beheld thirty millions of men happy and prosperous, without emperor, without king—(*cheers*)—without the surrounding of a court—(*renewed cheers*)—without nobles, except such as are made by eminence in intellect and virtue—without State Bishops and priests those vendors of the love that works salvation—(*cheers*)—without great armics and great navies—without a great debt and great taxes—and privilege has shuddered at what might happen to old Europe if this great experiment should succeed (*loud cheers*).<sup>24</sup>

Then Bright continued:

But you workers, you striving to a better time—you struggling upward to the light with slow and painful steps—you have no cause to look with jealousy upon a country which, among the great nations of the globe, is the one where labour is honoured more than elsewhere in the world, and where it has reaped its greatest reward.<sup>25</sup>

Bright then dwelt on the Southern philosophy of labor and emphasized that under this philosophy, it was not only the blacks who were to be slaves. The Southern remedy for the labor problem was to make labor capital. "The free system of labour is a rotten system—let us get rid of it," the slaveowners said. Whatever the mistakes the trade unions made—and like all organizations, they were not perfect—they would find themselves unable to function at all under the Southern philosophy. "I believe," Bright stressed, "there

never was a question submitted to the public opinion of the world which it was more becoming the working men, members of trades unions and trades societies of every kind in this country, fully to consider, than this great question (*cheers*)."<sup>26</sup>

Two resolutions and an Address to President Lincoln were next adopted. The first resolution, denouncing the "attempt of the American slave-owners to break up the Union," and the support they received from "capitalists and journalists" in England, and the British government, was supported in speeches by Howell (a bricklayer), Odger (a shoemaker and the secretary of the London Trades' Council, and T. J. Mantz (a compositor). Howell asked the workingmen "to raise their voices loud and strong against the attempt which was being made to establish an independent kingdom having for its chief cornerstone slavery (*cheers*)."<sup>27</sup> Odger defended the North against the charge that it had "no sympathy with the abolition of slavery," and drew attention to discrimination in England against the Irish. He expressed confidence that just as this was dying out in England, so discrimination against the Negro would cease when blacks were no longer "in a degraded condition." No workingman could be asked to support a government that was "seeking to keep four millions of their fellow creatures in endless bondage," and by adopting the resolution that had been proposed, they would strengthen the hands of the government of the United States, "which had set itself to uphold human rights and popular institutions."<sup>28</sup> Mantz began by praising the meeting as signifying that "trade unionists were determined at last to take an interest in political questions," and went on to praise the operatives of Lancashire for not allowing their distress to be used to aid the cause of the slaveowners:

Though their fellow-countrymen in Lancashire, among whom probably many of them had relatives and friends, were suffering unprecedented distress, he did not believe that a hundred workmen could be found to meet together to justify a recognition of the Southern Confederacy, even on the ground of finding employment for the distressed operatives of Lancashire (*Hear, hear*).<sup>29</sup>

The second resolution pledged the workingmen to use their "utmost efforts" to prevent the recognition of any government "founded on human slavery," praised Lincoln and the people of the North for their efforts to restore the Union, and asserted that "as the cause of labour and liberty is one all over the world, we bid them God speed in their glorious work of Emancipation."<sup>30</sup>

Cremer (a joiner) supported the resolution with extensive quotations from Confederate leaders proving that their objective was to uphold and extend slavery. He then charged that by supporting the doctrine of slavery for "labouring whites" as well as for blacks, the Confederacy had "thrown down the gauntlet to the free labourers of the world." It was up to British labor to take up this challenge, and "never have anything to do with the South." The Negroes should not only be set free, but "put on the same footing as free labourers," and allowed to "work out their own destinies (*cheers*). Give the negro the same chance to write and speak his thoughts freely and he would rise in proportion to the opportunities afforded him."<sup>31</sup>

Professor Beesly also seconded the resolution with a lengthy speech, the theme of which was that "the cause of labour is one, all over the world." The American question, Beesly argued, must be looked at, as must every question, by its bearing upon the interests of labor. The British ruling classes were united in defense of their order—the gentlemen of the South. "Well," Beesly insisted, "stand by yours." The ruling class regarded all workmen as dangerous people who had to be schamed against, deprived of the franchise, and kept down. Let them "shut the door of the House of Commons in your face and value themselves on their cleverness. But when there is need, you know how to make your voice heard. You would sweep away, like so many cobwebs, were it necessary, the flimsy constitutional handcuffs in which they think they have you fast." He concluded with a prediction:

We are met here tonight, we say it openly, not merely as friends of Emancipation, but as friends of Reform (*Loud cheers.*) This is the first time, I believe that the Trades' Unionists of London have met together to pronounce on a political question . . . but I am sure it will not be the last.<sup>32</sup>

After Connolly (a mason and an Irishman) also supported the resolution with the hope "as a trade unionist . . . that the North would be successful in its present efforts on behalf of the negro slave,"<sup>33</sup> Pletherbridge (a joiner) proposed the remarkable Address to President Lincoln, which one historian has ranked "among the finest expressions of solidarity in the history of man's war against oppression."<sup>34</sup> Denying the assertion that the people of England wished for the success of the Southern States "in their diabolical attempt to establish a separate government on the basis of human slavery," praising Lincoln for having abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, having recognized Haiti and Liberia, and having issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the Address urged him "*to go on*, unflinchingly, undauntedly, never pausing until the vivifying sun of liberty shall warm the blood and inspire the soul of every man who breathes the air of your great republic." It concluded:

Be assured that in following out this noble course, our earnest, our active sympathies will be with you, and that, like our brothers in Lancashire, whose distress called forth your generous help in this, your own time of difficulty, we would rather perish than band ourselves in unholy alliance with the South and slavery.

May you and your compatriots be crowned with victory; and may the future see the people of England and their brothers of America marching shoulder to shoulder determinedly forward, the pioneers of human progress, the champions of universal liberty.<sup>35</sup>

In seconding the adoption of the Address, Heap (an engineer) said, to laughter and applause, that it had been charged that trade unionists had "no sympathy with non-society working men, but this meeting would prove the contrary, for no one could deny that the negro labourer was a non-society man." Then to "loud cheers," he concluded the formal speeches with: "This meeting truly represented the working men of London, and the sentiments expressed would find an echo in the breasts of the working classes throughout the country."<sup>36</sup>

After the two resolutions and the Address to Lincoln were unanimously adopted, John Bright was thanked for his conduct in the chair and "for the noble manner in which he had always stood up for the rights of the people." Bright responded by declaring that few men in England had attended more public meetings than he, but he had "not attended one more gratifying in every respect than this has been." With that, the great St. James' Hall meeting of London trade unionists adjourned shortly after eleven o'clock.<sup>35</sup>

On April 9, 1863, Karl Marx wrote to Friedrich Engels:

... I attended the meeting held by Bright at the head of the trade unions. He looked quite like an Independent and every time he said, "In the United States no kings, no bishops," there was a burst of applause. The workers themselves spoke excellently, with a complete lack of bourgeois rhetoric and without in the least concealing their opposition to the capitalists (whom Father Bright, by the way, also attacked).<sup>36</sup>

Marx's enthusiastic description of the proceedings was matched by Henry Adams, who summed up its significance at the end of his report to the State Department as follows:

There could be no mistaking the manner in which the audience echoed the sentiments of the speakers, nor could anyone doubt what was intended. It may . . . be considered as fairly and authoritatively announced that the class of skilled workmen in London, that is the leaders of the pure popular movement in England, have announced, by an act almost without precedent in their history, the principle that they make common cause with the Americans who are struggling for the restoration of the Union, and that all their power and influence shall be used in behalf of the North.<sup>37</sup>

That Bright concurred with both Marx and Adams is revealed in a letter he wrote to Charles Sumner:

It was a great meeting and means much for those present, who are the choice men of the London workmen and artisan class. I endeavoured in my speech to widen your great question, and to show its transcendent importance to labour all over the world. The speeches of the workingmen were logical and good, and I am sure the effect of the meeting must be great.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the jeers with which Bright was greeted in the House of Commons when he referred to the London Trades' Council meeting,<sup>39</sup> no one in the seats of power in England could ignore the significance of the massive demonstration of British labor. The "nobodies" had spoken, and while the *Times* poured out its "usual ignorant contempt,"<sup>40</sup> the effectiveness of the demonstration could be gauged by the reactions of the agents of the Confederacy in London and the small group of old-time trade union leaders who still refused to abandon their hostility to the North. For example, *The Index*, which had been operating since May 1, 1862 as a Confederate organ, while representing itself as a polite journal of public affairs and letters,<sup>41</sup> expressed its fury at the St. James' Hall meeting, charging that the trade unions "have fallen almost invariably into the hands of professional agitators." It complained that Bright

had long planned "to use them for political purposes," and that at the St. James' Hall meeting, charging that the trade unions "have fallen almost invariably into the hands of professional agitators." It complained that Bright had long planned "to use them for political purposes," and that at the St. James' Hall meeting, he had finally succeeded. The meeting had revealed the fact that "the Throne, the Church and the Constitution of England," and not the Confederate States, were the real targets of Bright and the "professional agitators": "Very violent resolutions were passed, denouncing the aristocracy, the capitalists, and the press of England, . . . and an address to Mr. Lincoln, couched in a tone of slavish and fulsome eulogy, was adopted."<sup>42</sup>

Of course, it was well known that it was the trade unions that had organized the meeting and invited Bright, and not vice versa. But in its fury, *The Index* threw facts to the winds. So, too, did Sidney Smith, the notorious foe of labor and trade unions, writing as "Publicola" in the pro-Confederate *Weekly Dispatch*. Smith condemned the meeting in a vicious article, asking first "what have the Trades' Unions to do with the civil war in America," a subject which only the government had a right to deal with. Secondly, since the trade unionists who had organized the meeting were "paid agents of the North" who had "prostituted" themselves for a price, what they had had to say was of no consequence. But refusing to let it go at that, and remembering his own strikebreaking efforts in the strikes of the engineers in 1852 and the building workmen in 1859–60, Smith unleashed a blast of venom:

Now I want to know—yea or nay—are the working men of England ready to lend themselves to those unscrupulous vagabonds? Do they own, abet, plentify themselves with those Trades' Union tools of Yankee spies and suborned detectives? Who are the puppets in this dismal anti-national force? Howell, the bricklayer, Odgers, the shoemaker, Cremer, the joiner, Heaps, the amalgamated engineer, Fatty, the painter, Butler, the tin-plate worker, who take the parts of Bottom and Snout, and Quince, and Flute, the Starveling this in dismal rehearsal; have I not seen these names before? Here the Trades' Unions figure as moving resolutions about "liberties and Constitutional rights and the first principles of political society, against Government founded on human slavery," of thanks to Abraham the Czar of America, and of the cheering sentiment that "as the cause of labour and liberty is one all over the world they bid God speed in the glorious work of emancipation?" But the last time they appeared in public was as spies on their fellow-workmen, as suborners of apprentices to betray their masters, as paymasters of pickets to dog the steps of every man who dared to assert the right of labour to make its own bargain, as conspirators to create a privileged class and a monopoly of work to the exclusion of all who were not free of their craft. These are the gentry who now gabble about bloated aristocrats and the glories of Republican equality—identify labour with American liberty and "regard with indignation," forsooth, "those journalists" whom they hate as much and for the same reason as the farthing rushlight loathes the extinguisher.<sup>43</sup>

Robert Hartwell, the old Chartist and a firm supporter of the North, signing himself "Scourge,"<sup>44</sup> took on "Publicola" in the *Bee-Hive*. Since Smith had employed Shakespeare's characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hartwell opened with the quotation:

Oh, that I could place a whip in the hands of every honest man,  
To lash the rascal naked through the world!

(Shakespeare)

Then, noting that the inveterate foe of the workers and their unions was again "at his dirty work," Hartwell reminded Smith that the London trade unions had a perfect right to voice their opinion on the war in America:

... As trade unionists, associated together to improve and elevate their class, they feel it their right, their duty, and their privilege, to express their sympathy with all men, or any nation, struggling for their or its rights and freedom, no matter on which side of the Atlantic that struggle exists; and, in the second place, they as trade unionists, associated to protect their labour, believe that if the South were to succeed in their unholy attempt to extend their accursed slave institution into the northern territory, a large amount of negro slave labour would be brought into fierce competition with white free labour and wages would be reduced throughout the North; which would not only react on labour in this country, but destroy and close up that free labour market in the North, in which so many of their fellow countrymen now find room.

As for the charge that the sponsors of the meeting were "paid agents," bribed to organize the demonstration, Smith had simply "cruelly and shamefully libeled" men who he knew could never stoop so low as to be guilty. It was nothing but "a gross and wicked calumny," and merited no further response. Later, however, Hartwell did add the point that in fact, these men had actually been "paid—well paid—by the fact that the stand they . . . made in the name of the Trades' Unionists of England in favour of the North, is known to have considerably influenced the Government in its determination not to recognise the Southern slave kingdom."<sup>45</sup>

Although the trade union speakers at the St. James' Hall meeting had been listed as individuals, and not as representatives of their organizations, some pro-Confederate elements in their organizations tried to stir up a storm with the charge that they had acted without authorization. The most publicized attack was on T. J. Mantz, whom a "committee" of the London Society of Compositors criticized for having presumed to speak for the union, despite "the invariable rule of this society to avoid in any way mixing itself up, as an associative body, with political questions." Mantz did not retreat in the face of the attack. On the contrary, he shot back a reply that the action of his critics in resenting the fact that a member:

... had taken the liberty to express himself freely on a great social question involving the servitude of our slave brother, will rebound more to their discredit than mine by bringing down upon our society the ineffable contempt of those trades who have hitherto regarded us as an intelligent body. The committee may treat negro slavery as a political question if they please, but I take my stand upon higher ground and nobler principle. I view it as the hideous blot upon the fair face of humanity—the consuming cancer of the social system—as an institution that ignores the rights of the human being and calls into existence the forced labour of the bondsman in antagonism to the energies of the free artisan and operative. And once let us acknowledge the "Divine origin" and "political

necessity" of the institution of slavery, we have only one other sad duty to perform—to dissolve our trade unions and chant a requiem over their graves.

But apart from this, what great crime had actually been committed? Simply this—that the Society of Compositors, in common with other trades, "had raised its voice against negro slavery—a great crime, surely, to render a committee so radically nervous and stupidly squeamish." In truth, there was no need to obtain prior agreement from the group before he could speak at the meeting:

Did this committee of compositors imagine the Trades' Council would come down to consult them as to whether they should call a meeting upon negro emancipation? Or did they presume that I, being a member of their society, should ask of them the privilege of expressing my opinion at St. James' Hall? If they did they were greatly mistaken. . . . When I wish to know the sentiments of the printing profession, I shall boldly appeal to the whole trade, not to a few self-inflated members sitting in select committee.

He had, he declared, done what he had done many times before, and would do it again—"express my own views, after my own form and fashion, and if the committee do not like my sentiments, they must take them as a purgative to work off the ill-humours of their body."

Mantz then revealed how he had come to speak. He had been invited by the Trades' Council, not because he belonged to the compositors, but because he was "Trades' Unionist, and was believed to have some influence among Trades' Unionists. . . . I spoke at that meeting, without any reference to the Society or its committee, and if this is what the committee term representing their body, they are welcome for what I care to enjoy their opinions as long as they please." As for the charge that the committee had not authorized anyone to appear on their behalf, he could only reply that no one claimed that he did so appear. Then he went on:

But must I not speak till I get permission? Does the fact of a man belonging to the Compositors' Society ignore his rights as a politician, a debator, a lecturer, or writer? If so, the sooner they erase my name from their books, the better I shall like it. Talk about tyranny, indeed! I can conceive no greater tyranny than that a committee should seek to crush the rights of its individual members, because they entertain opinions at variance with their own.<sup>46</sup>

Although the *Bee-Hive's* contempt for the Emancipation Proclamation was a factor in the calling of the St. James' Hall meeting, and the name of George Potter does not appear among those on the platform (although he was present), nor did he speak to any of the resolutions;<sup>47</sup> nevertheless, that paper's report of the meeting, being the official one, was the most complete of all the accounts in the British press. Consequently, Charles Francis Adams sent a bundle of copies of the March 28, 1863, issue containing the official report to the United States. These copies were then distributed to journals in the North, which generally reprinted the resolutions, the Address to President Lincoln, and extracts from some of the speeches under the heading, "VOICE OF THE WORKING-MEN OF LONDON."<sup>48</sup> A large number

of American papers, moreover, published extracts from the proceedings of the Trades-Union delegation (made up of thirty-one members and officers of twelve trade societies) which, accompanied by Bright and Beesly, presented to Minister Adams the Address to President Lincoln and later received from him Lincoln's reply. Lincoln did not respond directly with a personal letter, as he had done in response to the Address of the Manchester workers, but he replied through Adams indirectly, stating briefly his appreciation for the Address, and his belief that "the Trades' Unionists have spoken the voice of the people of Great Britain."<sup>49</sup>

One incident during the presentation of the Address to Lincoln must have produced some smiles of satisfaction on the faces of the trade unionists. George Potter, who had joined the large deputation that went to the American Embassy, assured the American Minister that "it was principally amongst the upper and a certain portion of the trading classes that Southern sympathizers were to be found. A large mass of working men had no sympathy with the South, and they would only be too happy to see President Lincoln crush the rebellion and extinguish slavery."<sup>50</sup>

*Fincher's Trades' Review*, America's leading labor paper, featured the account of the delegation of London trade unionists that went, with Bright and Beesly, to present to Minister Adams the Address to President Lincoln adopted at the St. James' Hall meeting. "It is, perhaps, a new feature in our history," it commented editorially, "that statesmen should condescend to recognize the moral power that workingmen can exercise in public affairs." It was, in fact, "a most happy innovation upon the long established custom that has heretofore excluded the masses from participation in those matters which most affect their interests."<sup>51</sup> Almost a century later, in his great work, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, Carl Sandburg said the same thing somewhat differently. Referring to the messages President Lincoln had sent in response to the workingmen of Manchester and London, he observed: "It was not a custom for the ruling heads of nations to address letters to 'working-men' in other countries."<sup>52</sup>

In England, the *London Morning Star* praised the resolutions and the speeches of the workingmen at St. James' Hall and pointed out that the latter could not be distinguished, as far as quality of language was concerned, from "such orations as the majority of members deliver on the floor of the House of Commons." It then asked the logical question:

Can any rational person deny that the system which excludes such men from a voice in the administration of affairs is a disgrace to a country like ours, supposed to be intelligent and free? Can anyone deny that, while they are thus excluded, the shame falls on those who refuse them their rights, and that the loss is that of the whole nation?<sup>53</sup>

To His Excellency Abraham Lincoln,  
President of the United States.—

Sir,

We who offer to you this address are Englishmen and working-men. — the prize as our dearer inheritance, bought for us by the blood of our fathers, the liberty we enjoy, the liberty of free labor upon a free soil. —

We have therefore been accustomed to regard with veneration and gratitude the founders of the great Republic in which the liberties of the Anglo-Saxon race have been secured beyond all the precedents of the Old World, and in which there was nothing to condemn or to lament but the slavery and degradation of men guilty only of a coloured skin or an African parentage. —

We have looked with admiration and sympathy upon the brave generous, and untiring efforts of a large party in the Northern States to

To His Excellency Abraham Lincoln  
President of the United States of America

Mr. & Mrs. Lincoln  
Dear Public Meeting assembled I present our most respectful but  
heartily congratulatory on your re-election to the Presidential  
Chair.

We rejoice in the manner in which that  
declaration was constructed, as well as at its results, knowing,  
as it has done, that the possession of lawful political power  
by the masses of the people does not tend to last power even  
when exercised under extremely trying circumstances.

We regard the actions of the decisive majority which  
has again placed you in power as another proof that the  
great nation over which you preside is pledged to connect  
the restoration of the Union with freedom for the Negro, and  
with his being ultimately placed before the law on a perfect  
equality with the white man.

We lament the great sufferings caused by this  
war, as we abhor the treachery by which it was commenced, and  
we earnestly pray that peace may be established, not by men who  
compromised as would cause a speedy renewal of the war,  
but a peace, which being righteous, will also be permanent.

We deplore the unjust and unkind remarks  
of a portion of our people and their friends in reference to yourself  
and the great cause you represent; but these must no more  
be regarded as a fair representation of the opinion of Great  
Britain than the statements of some papers and public men  
in America respecting this country are to be taken as a fair  
representation of the opinion of America.

In conclusion we beg to assure you of  
our earnest prayer that Almighty God may long favor  
your life and give you all needed help in the important  
position you have been called to occupy at this critical  
period, and hoping that America will soon be reunited  
and free, and that your nation and our own may be  
ever found in perfect agreement for the good of the world  
and the glory of God. We bid you farewell.

Signed on behalf of, and at the instance  
request of the Workingmen of Lancashire, etc., etc.  
Newton-le-Willows

G. H. Morris, etc.

Copy of original letter in Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, of Address of  
public meeting of workingmen in London, congratulating Lincoln on his re-election to the  
presidency, discussed on page 84.

MANCHESTER CITY MISSION.—The NEW  
YEAR'S PRAYER MEETING will be held at the St. James's  
Schoolroom, Major street, back of Portland-street, on the 1st of  
January, 1863, at eleven o'clock, a.m.

TO NIGHT, FREE-TRADE HALL.—WORK-  
ING MEN'S MEETING for Union and Freedom, and to pre-  
sent an Address to President Lincoln. Chair to be taken at seven  
o'clock. Members of Committee should be at the Hall at half-past  
six. Doors open at six. J. C. EDWARD, Hon. Secretary.

THE FREE EVENING CLASSES for the Un-  
employed, held in the school under the Unitarian Chapel,  
Bridge-street, Strangeways, will be open on Monday, 5th January,  
1863.—On Saturday Evening past, there will be an ASSEMBLY-  
MENT. IVIE MACKIN, Esq. will take the chair. Doors open at  
half-past seven. Admission free.

ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE  
TO THE  
PEOPLE OF AMERICA  
FROM THE  
WORKING MEN OF LONDON.

TO CONGRATULATE THE WORKING MEN OF THE  
UNITED STATES  
ON THE

TRIUMPH OF NEGRO EMANCIPATION  
AND THE  
SUCCESS OF THE FEDERAL CAUSE;  
AND TO  
CULTIVATE INTERNATIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL  
ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE GREAT REPUBLIC OF  
AMERICA.

A MEETING of WORKING MEN of London  
will be held on THURSDAY EVENING next, May 4, at  
ST. MARTIN'S HALL, for the purpose of adopting an Address  
of Condolence to the People of America on the ASSASSINA-  
TION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN; and for the other Purposes  
above-mentioned.

T. B. POTTER, Esq., M.P. for Rochdale, in the Chair.  
Chair taken at Eight o'clock. Admission Free.

On behalf of the Working Men's Committee,  
GEORGE POTTER, "Bee-Hive" Newspaper,  
W. S. NORTHHOUSE, Member of the Emancipation and  
Garibaldian Committees, Joint Secretaries, pro tem.  
TEMPORARY OFFICE—10, Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London.

The Bee-Hive

LEFT: Notice of workingmen's meeting in Free Trade Hall, Manchester, inserted in the *Manchester Guardian* by a committee representing the workingmen of Manchester, and discussed on page 39. RIGHT: Notice in the *Bee-Hive* of last great meeting of British workingmen during the Civil War called in London to voice labor's grief over the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and joy over the victory of the Union and the end of slavery. Discussed on page 86.

ADDRESS FROM WORKING MEN TO  
PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Last evening, a public meeting was held in the Free-trade Hall, which was crowded, in order to pass resolutions in favour of the cause of the United States, and to adopt an address to President Lincoln. The meeting had been called by an advertisement, signed by J. C. Edwards and E. Hooson, two working men. Among those on the platform were Mr. T. Bailey, M.P.; Professor Greenbank; Messrs. J. R. Cooper, R. Cooper, James Edwards, Thomas Evans, S. Pope, W. J. Williams, Charles Thompson, J. R. Raper, J. C. Edwards, E. Hooson, Dr. J. Watts, and Jackson, President Davis's escaped coachman.—J. C. Euwaans said the promoters of the meeting were not prepared with chairman; but he saw that the Mayor of Manchester was in the room, and, considering His Worship's connection with the working classes in the past, and their esteem for him, he thought the Mayor was entitled to the position of chairman of the meeting. He made a motion to that effect.—E. Hooson said he was not aware whether the Mayor would feel awkward in taking the chair. But it was a matter in which the Mayor himself must be the judge. If the vote was adopted unanimously, he had no doubt that the Mayor would acquiesce.—The vote was adopted with acclamation, and the Mayor (Abel Heywood, Esq.) took the chair.—The Mayor said: Before I take the chair, I wish you to understand that I do not take it as Mayor of Manchester, but simply as Abel Heywood.—(Hear, Hear.) I will not compromise any member of the Council by the course which I will take to-night. I feel an interest in the proceedings of working men. I have felt an interest in their behalf during the whole of my life—(Hear, hear);—and whether I hold the position of chief magistrate, or in any other position, you may depend upon it that such feelings will animate me as long as I live.—(Hear, hear.) Upon the resolutions which are to be submitted to you to-night, I have nothing to say, because I have not seen them. I come here for the purpose of preserving order and decorum at the meeting. I have come here because I believe that the interests of the working men,—that the interests, in fact, of this great country are intimately bound up with the question which is to be laid before you to-night.—(Hear, hear.) Believing that the interests of this country are in a great measure at stake, and involved in the question to be submitted to-night, I should be wanting in my duty, and not acting the part of a patriot, if I shrank from the performance of that which I believe to be right.—(Hear, hear.) I, therefore, accept the chair which you have been kind enough to put me in, and shall now call on the speakers to propose the various resolutions.—(Applause.)—J. C. Euwaans, the secretary, read the following extract from a letter from Mr. J. Stuart Mill:

Blackheath Park, December, 26, 1862.

Dear sir,—I thank you very sincerely for your two letters, and for the important and most gratifying information which they contain. Hardly anything could do more good at present than such a demonstration from the suffering operatives of Lancashire, while there is in the fact itself, and in the state of mind which prompts it, a moral greatness which is at once a just rebuke to the mean feeling of so great a portion of the public, and a source of unqualified happiness to those whose hopes and fears for the great interests of humanity are, as mine are, inseparably bound up in the moral and intellectual prospects of the working classes.

A letter was also read from Mr. Hugh Mason, in which that gentleman said:—

I have no doubt whatever that the rebellion was planned, and has to this moment been promoted, for the sole object of perpetuating slavery, and my prayer is that it will fail of its diabolical purpose. I hope your meeting will be the first of many similar ones throughout our free country.

J. C. EDWARDS moved the following resolution:—

That this meeting, recognising the common brotherhood of mankind and the sacred and insuperable claim of every human being to personal

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD  
District Provident Society.

Take this Ticket to Mr. SMITH,  
at the Society's Offices, 41, Dale-alley,  
at Four o'clock.

No. ————— D

RELIEF TICKET FOR SIX WEEKS.

LEFT: Extract from the famous Address of Manchester workingmen to President Lincoln unanimously adopted by the meeting in the Free Trade Hall, and discussed on page 44.  
RIGHT: Reproduction in *Illustrated London News* of a relief ticket distributed among distressed Lancashire workingmen during the American Civil War and discussed on pages 8–9.

1864

April 10 It is nearly two years since I wrote anything in & the way of a diary I now take up my pen to resume the task. It has been a very poor time for me all the time, owing to the American war which seems as far off as settled as ever the Mill I work in was stopped all last winter during which time I had three shillings per week allowed by the relief committee which barely kept me alive when we started work again it was with Liverpool cotton and a great number of weavers can only depend two hours we can earn very little I have not earned a shilling a day this last month and there are many like me my clothes and bedding is wearing out very fast and I have no means of getting more as what wages I get does hardly keep me after paying rent rates and firing. I am living by my

Reproduction of a page of the diary of John Ward pointing up the severe impact of the Civil War on the economic conditions of workers in Lancashire, and discussed on page 6.

## 7. Varied Voices

In January, 1863, the Directors of the *Bee-Hive* insisted on George Troup's resignation from the editorship because of his pro-Southern views. After this, the paper began to shift its support to the Union, especially since, within a fortnight of Troup's departure, Professor Edward S. Beesly began writing for the *Bee-Hive*. Beesly's articles, which appeared almost weekly, were supplemented by letters from George Howell and other labor supporters of the North, and together they brought the *Bee-Hive* and the trade unions on a parallel course as far as the war in the United States was concerned.<sup>1</sup>

But not for long. In the summer of 1863, T. J. Dunning, secretary of the Bookbinders' Society and, as we have seen, a bitter foe of the North and a critic of the St. James' Hall meeting, again vented his hatred for the Union. He did this in three articles in the *Bee-Hive* on the "National Character of the Federal States." Most of the space in the pieces was devoted to a portrayal of the Northern character which made it appear that it merited less support than the South. The articles were replete with terms like "egotism," "lack of regard for the interests of others," "small power of judgment," "charlatanism," "brag," "iniquitousness," "windbaggism," "self-conceited," etc., and with long descriptions of corruption and mendacity of public life in the North. This one-sided picture was climaxed at the end of the third article with a slightly concealed slap at the St. James' Hall meeting. Dunning wrote scornfully:

Slavery, though not practically an institution in the North—alas for John Bright and all sincere haters of Negro slavery—was, up to the present quarrel, carefully fostered and protected. North and South conspired to make the whole of the continent under their control one vast slave pen. It is this circumstance and its corresponding results that cause so few heartily to sympathise with the North. . . . It is impossible to conceal the fact that if the South had desired to return to the Union, they would have been gladly received with slavery restored, more rampant than it ever had existed before. It is only spoken and acted against as a military measure, and because the North sees itself cut off from its profits, which, as it cannot participate in, it desires to destroy.<sup>2</sup>

Apparently nothing that had happened in the Civil War during the year and a half since the firing on Fort Sumter had had any effect on Dunning. But worse was still to come. In November, 1863, a new Board of Directors for the

*Bee-Hive* was elected, and they gave George Potter, the manager, a freer hand than he had enjoyed under the previous Board.<sup>3</sup> Just three months after their election, regular contributions from George Troup were added to those of Dunning, and once again the *Bee-Hive* began to tilt toward the Confederacy. Troup published three articles on the American question in February, 1864, and in the third of his signed contributions, he advised workingmen against emigrating to the Northern states. For one thing, he charged the federal government with hurling foreigners into battle unprepared and leading them to be slaughtered. He cited the case of an "Irish brigade," which was "absolutely slaughtered at Fredericksburg and other places by being kept continually in the front as a shield to the natives." And if the foreigners were fortunate enough to survive the war, they would find a country "on the verge of ruin," which, with peace, would become a "complete wreck." The only work they might find would be as strikebreakers, since "the working classes are almost everywhere and nearly in all trades on strike or threatening to strike for higher wages." Troup went on in this vein for several columns, concluding with disparaging remarks about Lincoln. The president, he charged, had "called out over 5,000,000 of men to conquer a white population . . . of 3,500,000, and as Xerxes was the only person on record who ever raised armies similar in numbers during the same time, perhaps we may infer that the management of Lincoln has been at par with that of Xerxes."<sup>4</sup>

Although it was headed "To the Editor and Shareholders of the *Bee-Hive*," Troup's vulgar attack on the North and Lincoln was published on the editorial page and appeared to be a statement of policy. The following week, a front-page attack on Troup entitled "An Editorial Explanation," by editor Robert Hartwell, appeared, in which the editor admitted that he had neglected to read the article before the type was set and assuring the readers and shareholders that had he done so, it would not have appeared, he apologized for its publication. Furthermore, he pledged that "while the paper remains under the present management, an article by whomsoever written, will not again appear in its leading columns advocating the policy of the Rebel slaveholder, or containing inuendoes against the policy of the North, or its illustrious and patriotic President." In a postscript, Hartwell called attention to two replies to Troup in the correspondence column.<sup>5</sup>

The first of these was by Beesly, who began by remarking that the readers of the *Bee-Hive* must have been "rather bewildered last week. They would rub their eyes and glance up at the date, to see whether they had not got hold of the *Bee-Hive* of eighteen months back." The rest was a point-by-point refutation of Troup's charges, using letters from workingmen who had emigrated to the United States to disprove Troup. Finally, Beesly suggested that Troup write for an openly pro-Southern paper where he would address "a sympathetic and more fashionable audience, and would receive other satisfaction of a more solid kind. But I trust and believe that among the workingmen who support the *Bee-Hive*, few would be found who would not deeply resent a continuance of such articles as that which he contributed last week."<sup>6</sup>

The other rejoinder was by Edmond Beales, president of the Polish League and a Radical barrister. Beales reminded the *Bee-Hive*'s readers that the most serious danger the country had faced since the outbreak of the war in the United States was "the recognition of the slaveholding Confederate States, and, as an almost necessary consequence, an alliance with them against the Federal States in America." Had this issue been left to the "decision of the aristocratical and money classes," most certainly war and "infamy and disaster would have been incurred." But this tragedy was averted:

The interference of the working classes, especially in this metropolis, and the enthusiastic demonstration in overwhelming numbers in favour of the Federal states saved the country from the possibility of both this dishonour and this suffering, and has added incalculably to the justice of their claim to the elective franchise.

No one, Beales argued, was "a true friend of the working classes" who now sought to turn them against the Union, and it was strange to find such an effort being made in the columns of the *Bee-Hive*, the official organ of the London Trades' Council. "Such, nevertheless, appears to be the object of the letters signed by George Troup."<sup>7</sup>

Beesly's and Beale's rejoinders to Troup started a running controversy which continued in one form or another for two months. Dunning leaped into the fray with another attack on the North and Lincoln in the process of defending Troup. He repeated his argument that if the South should be condemned for holding slaves, then the North should be equally denounced for being "the aiders and abettors and the receivers of the profit the wrongdoing brought it."<sup>8</sup> In his rejoinder to Beesly and Beales, Troup not only endorsed Dunning's attack on the North, but added to it by asking why support should continue for it in British working-class circles when it was fast becoming a place where freemen from Europe could no longer settle with any hope of being able "to earn bread by honest labour."<sup>9</sup>

Now more furious than ever, Beesly warned that if the *Bee-Hive* continued to devote more space to defenders of the South than of the North, he would simply stop contributing. He had helped the paper more than he could afford, he declared, and he saw no reason for continuing "if I found it becoming an engine for evil rather than for good. And this, in my opinion, it will be if it persists in the course it seems to have entered on."<sup>10</sup>

On April 21, 1864, editor Robert Hartwell announced that "all correspondence" on the subject provoked by Troup's original article was closed. The Directors had already acted several weeks earlier. Frightened by the outpouring of criticism and by Beesly's threat to leave the paper, they voted unanimously that the comments in Troup's offending article were "at variance with their opinions and those of the majority of the working classes."<sup>11</sup> Never again until the end of the Civil War was the *Bee-Hive* to carry any views on the war that voiced sympathy for the South and hostility to the North.<sup>12</sup>

Curiously enough, ever since the St. James' Hall meeting, the *Bee-Hive*

had been insisting that the sentiments expressed at that great gathering voiced the opinion "of the majority of the working classes." In the fall of 1863, surveying developments since the workingmen's meetings in favor of the Union, beginning with Blackburn, Stalybridge, Edinburgh, Manchester, Rochdale, Leeds, Liverpool, and climaxed by the St. James' Hall meeting in London, the *Bee-Hive* concluded:

Notwithstanding the desperate attempts which have been made by the paid Southern advocates, in and out of the press, to produce a feeling in favour of the Slaveholders' rebellion, it has proved an utter failure. They are unable to get up a public meeting in favour of the South in any large or populous town, but are compelled to burrow, like the mole, in darkness.<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, this is not exactly what happened. Instead, meetings were held during the late spring and summer of 1863, with some continuing into the fall of 1863 and the winter of 1864, mainly in Lancashire, to express organized support for the South. But it is significant that not a single workers' group, to say nothing of a single trade union, initiated or sponsored even one of these meetings; not a single worker spoke at any of them; and when resolutions were introduced calling for recognition of the Confederacy, many of those in the halls chanted slogans in favor of the North, and counter-resolutions were presented. Actually, one man—Joseph Barker, "a member of the executive committee of the Southern club" and an "official of the Southern Independence Association"—was the chief, and often the only speaker at these meetings.

When the *Dictionary of National Biography* wrote of Joseph Barker that his "views were constantly changing," it was indulging in understatement. Born in 1806 the son of a woolen factory worker in Bramley, near Leeds, he became a wool-spinner at an early age during a childhood of "great privation and suffering." He then rose to become an occasional Methodist preacher and worked himself up to a regular pulpit. After denouncing Socialism in the late 1830s, he turned around during the next decade and became involved in radical activities, advocating republicanism and nationalization of the land, and championing the French revolution of 1848. Arrested for his radical agitation, he was released on bail and soon thereafter he was elected a member of Parliament for the borough of Bolton. Set at liberty by the prosecution, he went off to the United States, joined the antislavery movement and even became an associate of William Lloyd Garrison. On his return to England, however, his inveterate habit of shifting his opinions led him to support the cause of the Southern Confederacy and, as an experienced lecturer, to propagate the slaveholders' position in Lancashire.<sup>14</sup>

Barker's theme was always the same—whether it was at Moseley, Sheffield, Leeds, Oldham, Bolton, Blackburn, Manchester, or any of the other Lancashire towns. It was that the British government must end the needless and pointless bloodshed in America by intervening and recognizing the independence of the Confederacy, and thereby end the catastrophic effects of the cotton blockade. As for slavery, Barker emphasized that there was:

... no hope for the real abolition of negro slavery but in the voluntary action of the Southern states themselves. . . . He [Barker] firmly believed that when emancipation was to be effected, it must be by peaceful methods, and that the establishment of Southern independence would facilitate and hasten the extinction of slavery.<sup>15</sup>

There is no evidence that any of the meetings at which Barker advanced his program were workingmen's gatherings or were endorsed by the workers of the town involved. No paper that reported the meetings—generally at great length—whether it was the *Leeds Mercury*, or the *Bolton Chronicle*, or the *Blackburn Standard*, or the *Blackburn Patriot*, or the *Liverpool Evening Post*, or the *Manchester Guardian*—and most of these were friendly to the South—made the claim that the meetings were workingmen's meetings.

Speaking in Blackburn on August 4, 1863, at a meeting organized by Barker and the Southern Independence Association, Ernest Jones challenged the sponsors of any of the meetings at which Barker was the chief (and often only) speaker to prove that he voiced the sentiments of the workers of Lancashire. He also challenged Barker to prove that these workingmen were not convinced that the program he and his Association advocated would not only not end slavery, but "would rivet the fetters of slavery on the negro more firmly than ever." Neither Barker nor the Association ever answered Jones's challenge.<sup>16</sup>

And yet when Ernest Jones addressed crowded meetings in Bury, Rochdale, Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester, and other Lancashire towns on the theme, "The Slave-Holders' War," even the local pro-Confederate press reported that the meetings were sponsored by workingmen, attended largely by workingmen, and with few dissensions, approved by workingmen.<sup>17</sup>

Ernest Jones was born in Berlin, the son of Major Charles Jones, a veteran of the Peninsular Campaign, who fought at Waterloo, and of a daughter of Alexander Annesly, a large Kent landowner. He was named after his godfather, the Duke of Cumberland, uncle to Queen Victoria and later King of Hanover. His father retired to an estate in Holstein and devoted himself to the education of his only child. He wrote that when Ernest was eleven years old, he was "already master of the English, German, French, and Italian languages."

Having published a volume of poems in 1830, Jones entered the aristocratic college of St. Michael, an institution into which foreigners were not usually admitted. From 1838 until his entry into Chartist politics in the spring of 1846, Jones occupied himself in literary and artistic activities. He entered the Middle Temple in March, 1841 and was called to the bar on April 20, 1844. In 1846 he joined the Chartist movement and rapidly rose to a position of leadership. He interested himself in the Irish question and became first a leftist Radical and later a Socialist. His first collection of political poems—*The Chartist Songs*—was published in August, 1846 and quickly established his reputation as a poet of Chartism. Thousands of people heard the poems sung or recited at meetings all over England, and during his lifetime, he received frequent testimonials to their power and influence.

Jones first met Marx and Engels in 1846 at the Fraternal Democrats, and they had a great influence on him, completing his political education. While he never became a Marxist, he grew increasingly radical, belonging to the militants on the left of the Chartist movement who refused to accept defeat after 1848. He was arrested in Manchester on June 6, 1848, for a speech he had delivered and was charged with seditious behavior and unlawful assembly. He was tried and sentenced along with five other prominent London Chartists. He was severely treated in prison and kept in solitary confinement, and as a result, he came out weakened in both health and strength.

In 1852 Jones founded a weekly organ, *The People's Paper*, where Marx assisted with editing, writing, fund-raising, and even recruiting additional writers. Jones also reprinted Marx's articles on Lord Palmerston from the New York *Daily Tribune*, a series which attacked the British Foreign Secretary for conniving at the defeat of democracy and revolutionary nationalism in Europe. Marx and Engels found in Jones an ideological adherent, one who adopted their strategic conception of the class struggle for the campaign to rebuild Chartism. "Jones is starting on the right tack," Engels wrote to Marx in 1852, "and we can definitely state that without our doctrine he would never have hit the right tack. . . ." Later, however, Jones drifted away from Marx and Engels, and they, in turn, were critical of his having jettisoned the Chartist program of an independent working-class policy for an alliance with the middle-class reform movement, a policy Engels called "very disgusting."

In 1854 Jones formed the International Welcome and Protest Committee, which organized welcomes to revolutionary refugees and protests against repression practiced all over Europe by the triumphant counterrevolution. The body survived until 1860, when it finally expired, but its work was taken over by other organizations, and Jones's influence was felt in the welcomes organized by the London Trades' Council for Garibaldi, in the protests against Russian repression in Poland, and in the enthusiasm displayed for the Polish revolution. When the London Trades' Council unhesitatingly took the side of the North during the American Civil War, it went further than many middle-class Radicals were prepared to go. No further, however, than Ernest Jones, who, from the outbreak of the war in the United States, made his position against slavery and for freedom immediately known. In the summer and fall of 1863 and the winter and spring of 1864, Jones moved about Lancashire, lecturing on the issues of the Civil War to working-class audiences, helping to clarify the questions involved in the great conflict, and bolstering the morale of the suffering and distressed operatives.

In these lectures, Jones dealt with three issues: (1) the origin and object of the war; (2) the right of the Confederate states to secede; and (3) the probable results of the struggle for both North America and England, and the duty of the British workers under the circumstances. With respect to the first point, he pointed out that "the battle was fought before the sword was drawn, in the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress." With an array of

statistics and quotations from political leaders, North and South, he traced the struggle over slavery in the territories and the effort of the South to maintain its ascendancy by increasing the number of slave states. Every state, whatever might be its population, he reminded his audiences, sent two senators to Congress. Hence, it was of vital importance for the South that the territories be formed into slave states. To accomplish this, Jones charged, the South brought about the annexation of Texas and plunged the United States into the Mexican War, just as it had previously plunged it into the Seminole War to compel the Seminole Indians to give up a few hundred slaves. He then quoted from editorials in Southern newspapers and speeches by Southern politicians in which they asserted that a victory for a Republican president would justify resistance even to the point of war. He then moved to the blunt declaration that slavery was "the cause, the origin, the aim, the object of this war." But, he continued, the British workers were told by Barker and other advocates of Southern independence and of British recognition of that independence, that if slavery was "the object of the war, why was it that in the Confederate constitution, the slave trade was prohibited?" Jones answered: "By an overwhelming majority, the slave trade was voted as a component part of the Confederate constitution, but when they found that they wanted to solicit the assistance of England and France and they knew we would not give it to them if we found the constitution thus, so President Davis put his veto upon that portion of it." It was "only a sprat to catch a herring," he said, and he predicted that if England and France should recognize the Confederacy, "it would be reopened again."

But the British workers had also been deluged with propaganda that the war was only for Southern independence, and was not independence a "noble cause"? He had only scorn for this argument:

Independence! It was not for the Union, but for the lash; not for freedom, but for fetters. Independence! The right of rebellion in defiance of all law. Independence! Independence for every man to whip his slave! But in order to gull the English, and get their sympathies, Southern advocates said—"Oh! we are in favour of the emancipation of the negro as much as you, but the North are going the wrong way to accomplish it. . . . We were told that the way to emancipate the slaves was to allow the South to secede. Then what was the war for? Why was the South making slavery the chief stone in their edifice, if the whole fabric is to be kicked down as soon as it is built—(cheers). We were told that the ruin of America would be the glory of England. He [Jones] was an Englishman, and loved his country as well as any man, but perish his own country if her glory was to be purchased at the ruin of another—(cheers). But the prosperity of America was the prosperity of England. The success of American institutions was a God-send to the working men of England—(cheers).

Then there was the argument that the best way to put an end to slavery was by helping the South win, for as soon as it was independent, "the South itself will extinguish slavery." This argument he dismissed with the questions:

Then why did it not extinguish it years ago, when it had majorities in Congress? Why did it lash, and tar, and maim every apostle of liberty who

dared to set his foot on Southern soil? Why did it levy war to maintain slavery, if it only desired to abolish it? Why did it rise against the North for wanting the very thing they say the South itself is seeking. Again, I repeat, why did it make slavery the cornerstone of its new temple, if it is to be pulled down as soon as it is built?

None of this meant that the North was without guilt. "The North has been guilty," Jones admitted, "but their greatest fault was in being too long suffering; they had held the candle to the devil too long, in order to preserve the Union."

But there was the argument that Englishmen should "sympathize with the South because they fought well. Well, give the devil his due; they did. So did the Austrians in Italy—yet he was for the Italians; so did the Russians in Poland—yet he was for the Poles—(cheers)." He drew somewhat the same analogy in answering the argument that, irrespective of slavery, the war should be stopped because it was "such a horrible and unchristian thing." Jones agreed that war was a great crime, but insisted that those who first made it were the criminals, and he advised those who deplored the carnage to tell those who began it to lay down their arms. Still, not all wars were criminal—only wars for tyranny, for oppression, for injustice:

But war for freedom is a holy thing, above all, war for the freedom of another—war for the freedom of the weak—war for the rights of humanity and the laws of God!

Were the Italians who fought for liberty criminals, or the Hungarians or the Poles? If so, then "give us more such criminals, oh God! Crown their arms with victory and slavery, both white and black, will soon be banished from this earth (great cheers)."

But then there was the so-called clinching argument of the "Southern advocates in England"—"that to 'stop the war' is the way to get the cotton," and they backed their words by "urging that it is to the interest of the English workingmen to recognize the South." At this point, Jones usually read from a leaflet distributed by the "Southern Independence Association, 26, Market Street, Manchester," circulated especially among workers of Lancashire. It went:

#### STOP THE WAR

STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN ENMITY TO THE NORTH.  
STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN DICTATION TO THE SOUTH.  
STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN BONDAGE TO THE BLACK.  
STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN INJUSTICE TO THE WHITE.  
STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN INTERVENTION BY THE SWORD.

STOP THE WAR DOES NOT MEAN VIOLATION OF RIGHTS.

#### STOP THE WAR.

STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN THE MEDIATION OF EUROPE.  
STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN THE INFLUENCE OF MORAL POWER.

STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN JUSTICE TO THE SLAVE.  
STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN BREAD TO THE HUNGRY.  
STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN PEACE ON EARTH.  
STOP THE WAR DOES MEAN GOOD WILL TO MEN.

#### STOP THE WAR.

THE TIME IS NOW FAVOURABLE. THE EMPEROR OF THE MOST WARLIKE NATION OF EUROPE HAS PROPOSED A CONGRESS OF NATIONS TO SETTLE NATIONAL DISPUTES. LET ENGLAND SECOND THIS PROPOSITION AND SHE WILL

#### STOP THIS WAR.

BRITISH WORKMEN, BE TRUE TO YOUR COUNTRY AND ASSIST THOSE WHO ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO AROUSE THE GOVERNMENTS OF EUROPE TO

#### STOP THIS WAR.

GIVE PEACE TO AMERICA.

GIVE FREEDOM TO THE SLAVE.

GIVE PROSPERITY TO LANCASHIRE.

Jones pointed out that he had already disposed of several arguments in the leaflet, such as the contention that the South would "give freedom to the slave" if its independence was recognized. He wanted mainly at this point to deal with the argument directed to the Lancashire workers in the leaflet and the other propaganda of the Southern Independence Association and the other supporters of the Confederacy, that mediation, followed by recognition of the Confederacy, would bring cotton to the cotton-starved districts. "If we are to have it, we want our supply to rest on a safe basis. If so, I say separation of the South from the North destroys our cotton manufacture—union alone can save it." Two rival states where one state had existed before "would never be long at peace." English workers would live constantly in fear "lest each new telegram should announce to us another conflict—and another war—a new blockade—a fresh panic for our cotton mills—and the old battles of misery and destitution have to be fought once more."

Then Jones put it straight to his audiences of workingmen and labor in every part of the British Isles:

Workingmen! I say the South is your enemy—the enemy of your trade, the foe of your freedom—a standing threat to your prosperity.

Is it for the slaveholders to appeal to workingmen for sympathy? Slave Labour is a direct aggression on the free labour of the world. It competes with you in the world's market, and you must crush it, or it will ruin you. Not yet, perhaps, but ere long.

Aye, sympathise with the South! Its first voice was an insult to the workingmen of England. It said: "We have four million black slaves here, but we have a million white slaves in Lancashire. Stop the cotton and they will starve, and force their government to interfere, by riot and insurrection."

He continued emotionally:

Those base planters did not know what English workingmen were made of. They deemed we should never enquire about the justness of their cause, but that cotton was our God, and we should obey his mandates. Therefore, they sent their agents over to us, appealing to our lowest instincts, to our most sordid self-interest. But woe to a people that puts its interests before its duties. It will find, when the day of reckoning comes, that the real interests and duties are identical, and it sacrifices one when it despises the other. But you have not done so. You have said, "Show me who is in the right, and I will tell you who is my friend"—and you will merit your reward—for the key that shall re-open your closed factories is the sword of the victorious North. By your conduct in this time of trial, you have laid one more laurel on the time-honoured brow of our country.

Two of the greatest spectacles of modern ages, it has been given to the Anglo-Saxon race to show: there, in America, its armed resistance to insurgent crime; here in England, its moral endurance of unmerited privation; here, the battle of patience against suffering; there, the conflict of patriotism against rebellion. On different fields, and with far different weapons, we are both fighting the self-same fight, and in the self-same cause—there with the blare of trumpet and the sound of cannon—here, in the sad silence by the fireless hearth;—there, showing what the Saxon man can dare and do—here, proving how much he can bear and never murmur.

In mill town after mill town, Jones then told the workers of Lancashire:

Hold on brave combatants, on either side. History may perhaps record in louder tones the deeds of the victorious soldiers, but her rewards are even-handed notwithstanding; —while the ashes of the dead will cloud the brightness of *his* laurels—and while *he* shall mourn amidst his triumph over the wounds of his country, *you* will be restoring, on a foundation of unbroken peace and order, the prosperity that has so cruelly been interrupted—with no regret to dim your smiles, no reproach upon your past, and no remorse upon your future. Do not darken the coming hour of happiness—do not tarnish the noble character you have won—by any base connivance with a criminal, by any foul condoning of a crime.

"On different fields, and with far different weapons, we are both fighting the self-same fight, and in the self-same cause." Jones repeated this theme in concluding his speeches, as he insisted that the mass agitation of the working class of England to prevent recognition of the Confederate States was a promise, not only for American, but also for British freedom. For the two struggles were intertwined, and as one triumphed, so would the other:

I trust that those who are now struggling honourably and constitutionally for the freedom of the black will join in every effort for a fresh installment towards the charter of an Englishman's liberty (*applause*). Those who put the slave-owners of America on a level with a holy crusade would like to be slave-owners in England, too (*cheers and hear! hear!*). . . . I trust that we shall find that in establishing liberty universally throughout the American Continent, we shall be placing the crowning pinnacle on the edifice of freedom here as well (*Loud cheers, great applause*).

As the cheers and applause died down, Jones's speech was invariably followed by the unanimous adoption of the following resolution:

That this meeting hereby expresses its sympathy with President Lincoln, in his endeavours to maintain the Federal Union of America, believing that its disruption would prove a calamity to the cause of freedom, and to the cause of civilisation; this meeting further expresses its gratitude to President Lincoln for having procured the freedom of the slaves in the District of Columbia, interdicted slavery in the territories, enforced the laws against the African slave trade, proposed to purchase the liberty of slaves in the loyal states, and, as commander-in-chief of the forces, proclaimed unconditional freedom to all bondsmen of the rebel states; this meeting is also desirous that he may continue his noble efforts until a safe and enduring peace be established on the basis of the complete emancipation of every slave in the American states.<sup>18</sup>

It would be difficult to exaggerate the impact of Ernest Jones's speeches on the workingmen of Lancashire. John Bright, who has received the greatest attention in historical literature as the foremost and most influential British champion of the Union, did not, by the time of the Civil War, have much influence in working-class circles in Lancashire. Not so in the case of Ernest Jones, who, unlike Bright, not only never wavered in his support for the working class, but fought tirelessly as lawyer and lecturer on their behalf during the Chartist days, composed some of the greatest working-class songs of England, and went to prison because he dared to defend the principles of labor.<sup>19</sup> Introducing Jones to the audience of workingmen of Ashton-under-Lyne, the chairman noted that the name of the speaker about to address them was "not strange to the working people of Lancashire. . . . The name of Ernest Jones has been uttered in times past with affection and reverence by the working people of Lancashire. Ernest Jones, in times past, was recognised as one of the great leaders of the working people of England when they were struggling for political rights."<sup>20</sup> Invariably, a vote of thanks to Jones was followed by someone who, in the course of seconding the resolution, recalled some specific aspect of Jones's contribution to the struggles of the British working class. In Rochdale, in March, 1864, Isaac Hoyle, in supporting the resolution, said that "being a Chartist of the old school to which Mr. Jones belonged, and considering that he [Mr. Jones] had experienced little benefit from the aristocracy of this country by having served a long term of imprisonment for advocating the rights of his [Mr. Hoyle's] class, he could not let the opportunity pass by without cordially supporting the vote of thanks just proposed—(*hear! hear! and applause*)."<sup>21</sup>

While Bright's defense of the Union and criticism of the Confederacy produced critical responses from a few workers and trade unionists, who charged that nothing he said should be heeded by men whose cause he had maligned during the factory act and strike movements, Jones's repeated condemnations of the slaveowning Confederacy and his arguments in favor of working-class support for the Union brought not a single criticism from any British worker or trade unionist. For Ernest Jones had been a consistent champion of British workers and a consistent defender, too, of the trade unions—a man who merited their confidence when he said that the best interests of the British workers were linked to the victory of the North. When he had finished, in whatever Lancashire city he was addressing, the local

press conceded he had solidified, beyond any danger of being weakened, the support for the Union among the workers of that community.<sup>22</sup>

## 8. Triumph of the Union and Labor Reform

The American Civil War was one of the major factors responsible for the growth of working-class internationalism in Britain during the 1860s. It had been preceded by the new phase of the Italian liberation struggle touched off by the Franco-Austrian War of 1858–59, and immediately after it began, there occurred the Polish insurrection.<sup>1</sup> The American Civil War also stimulated international feeling in France, where the bonds of working-class internationalism were strengthened by the support of the Union among French workers, many of whom suffered almost as severely as those in Lancashire as a result of the “cotton blockade.”<sup>22</sup>

In the United States, the evidences of interest in working-class internationalism were also present. In March, 1864, the New York Working Men's Democratic Republican Association, formed by trade unions of the Empire City to combat Copperhead influence in labor circles and to rally consistent support for the war against slavery,<sup>3</sup> sent greetings to their “brothers in toil” in the British Isles, assuring them that they understood and appreciated their suffering:

Our hearts have beat with a painful sympathy as we have heard of the want, the suffering, and the wretchedness which were heaped upon the labourers of Great Britain and France, as a consequence of our strife.

Yet in all this terrible suffering and despair, the hopes, the prayers and the hearts of the British workmen have been with the free workingmen of the North. All the arts of intriguers, all the false reports of the emissaries of the slave-power of the South, all the artifices of slave-trading factors, have not moved the heart of the British working man from his union with the unbought and unsold workingmen of the North. All honour to our brother of the United Realm! All thanks out of deep wells of sympathy and fraternal love! All praise to the heroic virtue of the desponding workers, who could look through their tears of woe and want, well knowing the cause, and yet refused to become the accomplices of the traitors who have sworn to fill up the measure of their gigantic crime against Liberty, and their arrogant attempt to lay the world under tribute of their damning wrong. All honour to the men who have so nobly refused the proffered bribe, which would have been the price of their own liberty, and the temporary lure to their own betrayal. When the storm will have passed, and the adversities

of the time shall have given place to a better and brighter future, they will leave to their children the inheritance of a bright example, and the rich reward of a glorious renown.<sup>4</sup>

The Working Men's Democratic Republican Association received messages of appreciation from workers and unions in England, which were published in its organ, *The Iron Platform*.<sup>5</sup> It also received a document from Ireland entitled "Ireland to Irishmen in America: Address of the Working-men of the Capital of the Fatherland to their kindred of their own order in the Loyal States of the Republic," with the request that the Association reprint and distribute it among the Irish workers in the North, many of whom were known to be supporters of the Copperheads and strongly anti-Negro.<sup>6</sup> The Address of the workingmen of Ireland went in part:

There can be no disguising the broad, palpable fact that slavery is at the root of this foul rebellion. Upon that point, then, it behooves you to fix a stern regard. Now, the unanimous voice of the whole Christian world denounces as utterly execrable the slavery, as exercised in the Southern States. But yet it has many sympathizers in the great cities of the North—the chief centres of trade and commerce. You have there a strong moneyed interest sharing the profits of slavery and heedless of its iniquity. . . . These men are cleverly exploiting you for their own uses. Seeing you so zealously in their cause, unpleasantly reminds us of the pungent truth, which we deem it not inopportune in this connection to put before you—"Faction is the madness of the many for the benefit of the few." Their ends and aims are not your ends and aims, whilst you lend yourselves the blind instruments in attaining them. . . . They have unscrupulously fomented for an obvious, wicked purpose, that ungenerous jealousy which you have too often evinced toward men of your own order—the free workers of the colored race—your fair rivals in the open labor market—a mean jealousy which we have blushed to observe, has sometimes driven you to unmanly and cruel excesses.<sup>7</sup> They have taught you to look with disfavor upon the emancipation of the negro, under the false impression that it would glut the labor market of the North by wholesale immigration of the freed slaves of the South.

But it was not only for the "sake of the poor negroes alone" that the Irish workingmen in Dublin pleaded with the Irish workers in America to become actively involved in the struggle to win the war against the slaveowners. They pointed out that white workers, too, were the targets of the Slaveocracy, and that if the Confederacy should triumph, its goal would be realized: "white labor and black labor alike would be slave." "Stand together, brothers all," the Address concluded, as it urged the Irish to rally behind the administration of President Lincoln.<sup>8</sup>

According to George Howell, the bricklayers' leader, "The Nine Hours Movement was the starting point for other movements, some of which have left their mark on the political, as well as the industrial history of the country." Coinciding with the Nine Hours agitation were three political struggles that deepened the labor movement's international connections. These were the campaigns in solidarity with the Polish and Italian national movement, and the struggle to prevent intervention in the American Civil War on behalf of the

South. Finally, in 1864, into this politically charged atmosphere, the English employers supplied the spark—the importation of European workers as strike-breakers—that drove the leaders of the English trade unions to unite with representatives of the European labor movement and create the organization that "changed the history of the world." This was the International Workingmen's Association, or, the First International, as it has come to be called. If it had done nothing else, Robert Applegarth, the Secretary of the carpenters' union in England, a member of the Association's General Council, said, the International should be honored for stopping the English employers from freely importing European workers to break strikes. "But it had done more," he added. "It had enlarged the views of English trades' unionists, and showed them that trade unions could be used for higher purposes than simple wage-quarrels, and that an international union was necessary to attack the evil that oppressed them at the root."<sup>9</sup>

As Royden Harrison has noted, the broadening of horizons among British workers produced by the American Civil War "prepared their leaders for participation in the International Workingmen's Association." This is not to claim that the Civil War in the United States was the immediate issue around which workers' representatives from different countries came together in London in the early fall of 1864 to organize the IWA. It had, in fact, been the Polish question that had sparked the famous address "To the Workmen of France from the Working Men of England," urging "a gathering together of representatives from France, Italy, Germany, Poland, England, and all countries where there exists a will to cooperate for the good of mankind." It continued:

A fraternity of peoples is highly necessary for the cause of labour, for we find that whenever we attempt to better our actual condition by reducing the hours of toil, or by raising the price of labour, our employers threaten us with bringing over Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians, and others, to do our work at a reduced rate of wages.

If these threats had thus far been successful, it had been because of "a want of regular and systematic communication between the industrious classes of all countries, which we hope to see speedily effected."<sup>10</sup>

The combined suffering and pro-Union activities of the workers, both in England and France, confirmed their growing conviction that they had interests in common. To sum up, if the Polish question served as the occasion for bringing together French and English labor delegates to a public meeting in July, 1863, which culminated in the meeting in St. Martin's Hall on September 28, 1864 where the International Workingmen's Association—the First International—was born, the American war and the support of the British and French workers for the struggle against slavery and for the Union, provided the setting for it and helped create the condition in which it arose.<sup>11</sup>

Although he appeared only as "a mute figure on the platform" at the Inaugural Meeting,<sup>12</sup> Karl Marx was elected to the General Council of the First International, and it was he who wrote the Preamble of the Provisional

Rules and the Inaugural Address of the Association. The former announced that the organization stood for justice toward all men "without regard to colour, creed, or nationality," while the latter included the famous section:

It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic.<sup>13</sup>

As Marx and leading British trade unionists saw it, support for the North had to be at the top of the International's agenda. This was certainly one of the reasons why, although he was most eager that the *Bee-Hive* should become the special organ of the International—which it did—<sup>14</sup> Marx wanted George Potter out of the picture. Among other things, he feared that Potter's pro-Confederate tendencies might again influence the paper's editorial policy. On December 2, 1864, Marx wrote to Engels:

It is impossible, of course, to have a movement here without a press organ. Therefore the *Bee-Hive* (weekly organ of the Trade Unions) has been declared the organ of the workers' association. Through a piece of hard luck, such as the workers often suffer, a rascal by the name of George Potter . . . has entrenched himself—he is manager—with a clique of shareholders up to now to form the majority.<sup>15</sup>

Potter stayed on; the *Bee-Hive* remained firm for the Union.<sup>16</sup> Reporting the military victories of the Northern armies, the paper, as early as mid-September, 1864, predicted that "ere long, the Southern Slave Confederacy must succumb to the power and irrepressible spirit of the North." But it was not only on the military front that the North had moved ahead and filled the hearts of its supporters with joy. Its progress in other directions was "still more satisfactory," as its adherents regarded what had been accomplished for "the progress of liberty" since the war had begun, as witness, said the *Bee-Hive*:

1. Emancipation in Western Virginia.
2. Emancipation in Missouri.
3. Emancipation in the District of Columbia.
4. Emancipation in Maryland.
5. Slavery forever prohibited in all the territories.
6. Kansas admitted as a free state.
7. Colorado, Nebraska, and Nevada, provisionally organized as free states.
8. Idaho, Montana, Dakotah, and Arizona, organized as free territories.
9. Hayti and Liberia (coloured people), recognized as independent republics.
10. Three millions of slaves declared forever free by Proclamation of the President, 1st January, 1863.
11. All fugitive slave laws utterly abrogated.
12. Negroes admitted to equal rights in the United States Courts.
13. The inter-state slave trade abolished.
14. Equality of the negro recognised in the public conveyances of the District of Columbia.

15. All rebel states prohibited from returning to the Union with slavery.
16. Free labour established on numerous plantations in South Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, and in Eastern Virginia.
17. Free schools for the education of freed slaves established in South Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, and in Eastern Virginia.
18. The wives and children of all slaves employed as freed men in military and other service of the United States, declared free.
19. Negroes, whether previously bond or free, enrolled as part of the military forces of the nation.
20. The Federal Government forbidden by Congress to employ any man as a slave in any capacity.
21. One hundred and fifty thousand negroes, mostly freed slaves, in the pay and uniform of the Federal Government, as soldiers of freedom fighting for the Union.
22. A new international treaty by the Federal Government with this kingdom, for the suppression of the slave trade.
23. The passing of the Homestead Bill whereby the free and landless may become freeholders on the free soil of the territories.
24. The loyal people of Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Florida (rebel states), seeking a return to the Union on the basis of freedom to all.
25. The Republican National Convention at Baltimore, June 8th, 1864, declared unanimously for the re-election of Abraham Lincoln, and for an amendment to the Constitution to prohibit slavery forever.

One had merely to examine this list, exulted the *Bee-Hive*, to conclude that all of the sacrifices British workers had made were justified, and to conclude, too, that "no true patriot can oppose the reelection of President Abraham Lincoln." In fact, it went on, "nine-tenths of the *bona fide* workingmen of this country" were praying for his reelection, because "in addition to their natural detestation of slavery and its upholders, they feel that the success of the Southern rebels would be a serious blow at the independence of labour throughout the world. Hurrah, then, for Abraham Lincoln."<sup>17</sup>

The General Council of the First International arranged to have the list of twenty-five achievements of the Lincoln administration reprinted and distributed at a soirée held in support of the Union, to which Minister Charles Francis Adams, at the IWA's request, donated an American flag, since no other was available.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, in the United States, Carl Schurz, a refugee from German despotism following the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, and a leader among German-Americans, called the attention of American workers, while campaigning for Lincoln's reelection, to the president's warm relations with labor in England. Did they not remember, he asked, "the touching address of the workingmen of Manchester" to Abraham Lincoln?

While the instincts of despotism everywhere conspired against us, while the aristocracy of Great Britain covered us with their sneering contempt, while the laboring men in England began to suffer by the stopping of the cotton supply, and the nobility and the princes of industry told them that their misery was our fault, the great heart of the poor man rose in its magnificence and the English

laborer stretched his hard hand across the Atlantic to grasp that of our President, and he said: "Although want and misery may knock at my doors, mind it not. I may suffer, but be you firm! Let the slave be free. All hail, American people! We are your brothers!"<sup>19</sup>

In late November, 1864, the news of Lincoln's reelection reached London. This provided a new opportunity for the workers there to register their support for the Union. On December 13, 1864, two delegations waited in the United States Embassy in London to meet with Minister Adams and present him with addresses congratulating the American people on Lincoln's reelection.<sup>20</sup> One represented a group of workingmen of South London, who had met on December 8 and adopted a congratulatory address, in which, among other points, they informed Lincoln that they regarded "the action of the decisive majority which has again placed you in power as another proof that the great nation over which you preside is pledged to connect the restoration of the Union with freedom for the negro, and with his being ultimately placed before the law on a perfect equality with the white man."<sup>21</sup>

The other delegation consisted only of W. R. Cremer, representing the General Council of the First International, who came to request permission for a deputation of about forty, consisting of "French, German, Italian [and] Polish groups and English representatives," to hand over its address to Minister Adams to be forwarded to President Lincoln.<sup>22</sup>

When it was proposed that the General Council of the IWA send an address to Lincoln congratulating him on his reelection, a committee was formed for this purpose, and Karl Marx was asked to write the text of the address. His draft was approved, signed by all members of the Council, and turned over to Minister Adams.<sup>23</sup> The latter must have been a bit nervous about being associated with the IWA, for he wrote in his diary on December 15, 1864:

The whole proceeding is somewhat of an anomalous character. I have great doubt of its propriety, but in the present condition of opinion here it is necessary to hazard something in order to maintain the popular organisation which is our only bulwark against the hostility of the upper classes. The American connection is essential to the support of liberal principles here and throughout Europe.<sup>24</sup>

And so Adams forwarded the address to President Lincoln.

On January 7, 1865, the *Bee-Hive* published the address to President Lincoln written for the General Council of the First International by Karl Marx. In that famous document, Marx noted that the Civil War was of decisive consequence for the destiny of the working class throughout Europe, and that, understanding this, everywhere "the men of labour . . . bore therefore patiently the hardships imposed upon them by the cotton crisis, opposed enthusiastically the pro-slavery intervention—importunities of their betters—and, from most parts of Europe, contributed their quota of blood to the good cause."

As long as the workingmen of the United States, Marx continued, had "allowed slavery to defile their own republic," they were "unable to attain

the true freedom of labour, or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation; but this barrier to progress has been swept off by the red sea of civil war." Just as the American War of Independence had "initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American Anti-Slavery War will" for the working classes. The emancipation of the Negro slaves would remove the major obstacle to the further advance of the American working class, and it was quite fitting that "Abraham Lincoln, the singleminded son of the working class," should be the leader of such a transformation.<sup>25</sup>

On January 28, 1865, Minister Adams informed W. R. Cremer, secretary of the IWA General Council, that the president of the United States had received the Council's address. "So far as the sentiments expressed by it are personal," he added, "they are accepted by him with a sincere and anxious desire that he may be able to prove himself not unworthy of the confidence which has been recently extended to him by his fellow citizens and by so many of the friends of humanity and progress throughout the world." The government of the United States, he went on, sought "to do equal and exact justice to all states and to all men," and it relied on support at home and throughout the world to enable it to achieve this goal. Nations did not exist for themselves alone, "but to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind by benevolent intercourse and example." In this relationship, the United States regarded:

. . . their cause in the present conflict with slavery-maintaining insurgents as the cause of human nature, and they derive new encouragement to persevere from the testimony of the working men of Europe that the national attitude is favored with their enlightened approval and earnest sympathies.<sup>26</sup>

Union forces had taken Atlanta, Georgia, on September 2, 1864, and after the city's fall, General Sherman marched through Georgia with his army of 60,000, capturing Savannah on December 22. Having reached the sea, Sherman's troops moved northward through the Carolinas. Meanwhile, General George H. Thomas defeated a Confederate army at Nashville, Tennessee, on December 15 and 16. Fort Fisher, which guarded a blockade-runners' port at Wilmington, North Carolina, fell to the North on January 15, 1865. Caught between the forces of General Grant in the north and General Sherman in the south, the Confederate armies were soon vanquished. General Sheridan's victory at Five Forks, Virginia, on April 1 led to the Confederate evacuation of Richmond on April 3. Lee surrendered to Grant at the Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia on April 9. After Lee's surrender, General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to General Sherman on April 18 in North Carolina. The remaining Confederate forces west of the Mississippi, under General Richard Taylor, surrendered to General Edward R. Canby on May 4. The last Confederate army, led by General Kirby Smith, surrendered to General Canby on May 26 in Louisiana. Confederate President Jefferson Davis fled to Georgia, where he was captured on May 10 and imprisoned.

On the night of April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth, an American actor and Confederate sympathizer, fatally shot President Lincoln in the head as

he was watching a play at a theater in Washington, D.C. Because Lincoln's head wound made travel to the White House risky, he was carried across the street to a house opposite the theater. There he was cared for until he died at seven o'clock the next morning.

On April 14, the day on which Lincoln was shot, Union army officer Robert Anderson, who had surrendered at Fort Sumter at the beginning of the Civil War, symbolically raised the American flag over the fort.

The workers in England remained vigilant while the Union army was completing the defeat of the Confederate states, opposing every new effort to get the British government to intervene and recognize the Confederacy. When news of the Northern victory in April, 1865, arrived, the *Bee-Hive* put the British government on notice that the end of the Southern rebellion was "a warning to other peoples, that no nation is really strong where the majority of its citizens are deprived of a voice in the management of public affairs." For labor, the victory over the Slave Power had a special meaning:

The lesson taught to working men by Northern success is one from which they cannot fail to profit. It is, in few but grave words—

**"ASSERT YOUR RIGHTS!  
BE UNITED!"**

These were the watchwords of victory in America. Shall they not make us victorious in England?<sup>27</sup>

In spite of their joy over the good news of the Union triumph, the news of Lincoln's assassination produced a great sadness in the workers from one end of England to the other. The April 29, 1865, issue of the *Bee-Hive* carried the announcement of a meeting of workingmen of London to be held on May 4 at St. Martin's Hall for the purpose of adopting an:

**ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE to the PEOPLE OF AMERICA from the WORKING MEN of LONDON. TO CONGRATULATE the WORKING MEN of the UNITED STATES on the TRIUMPH OF NEGRO EMANCIPATION and the SUCCESS of the FEDERAL CAUSE. AND to CULTIVATE INTERNATIONAL and INDUSTRIAL ARRANGEMENT with the GREAT REPUBLIC of AMERICA.**

At this last great mass meeting of British workers on the American Civil War, the front of the galleries of St. Martin's Hall was hung with black cloth, edged with white, and the American flag occupied the center of the west galleries. But T. B. Potter, M.P. for Rochdale, who acted as chairperson, opened the meeting by pointing out that this was not just a time for mourning, but one for action as well. It was important to remember that Union, "that symbol of the success of popular government in America," stood "not merely to knock the fetters off the slave, but to give him the rights of citizenship (*loud applause*). We, too, in England held to the programme of Union and emancipation—the programme laid down by the late Mr. Lincoln—with unanimity among all men in England to obtain justice and emancipation from those remnants in feudalism, a privilege which still trammelled men in this country (*Hear, hear*)."<sup>28</sup> The working men of London, who had organized this meeting,

"felt the deepest sympathy with labour in America. The cause of the one was the cause of the other."<sup>28</sup>

In the proceedings that followed, the major themes struck were those of rejoicing over the Union victory, tremendous grief over the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, along with sympathy for his widow, pride in the contribution of the British workers to the achievement of Union victory, and determination to utilize the victory of American freedom to advance British freedom. On the role of the British workers during the Civil War, Leicester, a glass worker, summed up the attitude of the meeting with the statement:

When that hellish compact was entered into among the Southern slave-owners to throw off the yoke of the legitimate government, there was a privileged class in England who sympathised with them, and would, if they could, have aided them, but the working classes had always stood for freedom. They slipped in and would not allow that class to carry out their purpose.<sup>29</sup>

George Potter followed with his first public address on the issues of the American Civil War during the entire conflict. His words of praise for the fallen president were unlimited in their magnitude. Sad though those present were at his passing, Potter declared, they could at least gain comfort from the fact that he had accomplished his "great work," "that of negro emancipation (*loud cheers*)."<sup>30</sup> "Let us not forget," he cried, "that he was a working man. Lincoln rose from the poorest of the people, winning his way slowly but surely upwards by sheer hard work, persevering in every success stage with a character unspotted and a name untainted." Paraphrasing an earlier editorial in the *Bee-Hive*, he declared:

Look at what he has done. Four years ago, when he was elected to the presidential chair, slavery was lifting its accursed head over the American continent, blasting and blighting the face of that fair republic. Many good men began to despair of any means of extinguishing Negro thralldom. The agitation of 30 years had accomplished very little towards its extinction. The doctrine of state rights guarded every community and turned it into a citadel, which none dared approach without peril. But the first shot fired from Fort Sumter severed the Union, and sealed the doom of slavery. An unerring Providence had selected Abraham Lincoln for the arduous work which was thenceforward to be done. Nobly and determinedly did Abraham Lincoln do that work. State after state was traversed, city after city was taken, port after port was surrendered, till at length the rebel capital was evacuated, its army put to flight, and the foul blot of slavery was wiped away from the great republic forever. We, the working men of England, feel the loss of such a man, and deeply sympathise with our working brethren in America. It was to emancipate slavery and to elevate labour that Abraham Lincoln lived and died. We lament his loss and we hope and trust that his martyrdom will be the death knell of slavery and oppression throughout the world.

It is probable that many in the audience, who had been handed a handbill as they entered the hall, headed "George Potter's Sympathies for the Southern Rebellion (as manifested in the *Bee-Hive* of which he is manager and secretary)," must have wondered if they were listening to the same man.<sup>30</sup>

Robert Hartwell, editor of the *Bee-Hive*, next read the first resolution and the address of condolence to Mrs. Lincoln. The former expressed "grief and indignation" over the assassination, while the latter urged Mrs. Lincoln to remember, in her grief, that her late husband "was looked up to by the working men of all countries as their champion, and, though cut down in the hour of triumph, he yet lived long enough to see the dawn of negro emancipation, rising rapidly before him."

The resolution and address were seconded by Leicester, the glass worker, who spoke of Lincoln as "a horny-handed son of toil," and a victim of the "chivalry of the South," the same chivalry that had "nearly murdered Sumner in the senate-house." In his seconding speech, Osborne, a plasterer, declared that although it had been said that republicanism in America was in its trial, "republicanism at this moment stood forth brighter and more glorious, stronger and more determined than at the time when Washington seceded from the aristocracy of this country. (*Hear, hear.*)"<sup>31</sup>

Mason Jones followed and praised the "beautiful and pathetic address written by workingmen." After paying tribute to Andrew Johnson, who had succeeded Lincoln to the presidency, Jones assured the American people that even if the "West-end clubs" sneered at a man from the lower classes becoming president of their country, this was certainly not the attitude of the English workers: "The great offence with Lincoln and Johnson was that the one was a rail-splitter and the other a tailor; but that was no reason why they should not become presidents. They would not have been elected if they had not superior ability."<sup>32</sup>

Jones then reported an interview he had had with the late President Lincoln in the course of which the following conversation took place:

... the President said, "These Lancashire operatives have acted a noble part during the rebellion. What do they think of the proclamation?"

He [Mr. Jones] replied, "They have only one fault to find with it; that it was not done soon enough."

President Lincoln replied, "Well, we cannot help that. But I wanted to say this. I never knew anything truer than their conduct. They knew that to get cotton would be to them to get work and to get food. Their instinct would be to break through the blockade and get the cotton. But they could not allow their instinct to override their conscience."

This was received with tremendous bursts of applause, repeated over and over again, after which the first resolution and address were adopted unanimously.<sup>33</sup>

Robert Hartwell then read the second resolution and address. The resolution declared that, in addition to expressing its deep sympathy with the people of America for the great loss they had sustained, the meeting also wished to convey to the president, the government, and the people of the United States its congratulations on the decisive successes of the Union armed forces, "affording a just hope of a speedy suppression of the rebellion, and the entire extinction of the accursed slave institution." This address, in some ways even more moving than the first, voiced deep grief over Lincoln's

assassination and assured the American people that "his memory will be endeared to, and enshrined in, the hearts of the toiling millions of all countries as one of the few uncrowned monarchs of the world. Abraham Lincoln has been sacrificed in the cause of negro emancipation, and the freedom of the slave has been consecrated by the blood of his deliverers." It concluded:

People of America. . . . Be assured whatever you have heard to the contrary: either in Parliament, with which we have nothing in common, and in which we are not yet represented, or in the leading articles of the corrupt and venal portion of the press, the workingmen of Great Britain have always been sound upon the great struggle in which you have been engaged; and while you have been fighting, they have been anxiously watching and awaiting the time, now it would appear so happily approaching, when the rights and dignity of labour shall be acknowledged to exist equally in the black man as in the white. It was for this that Abraham Lincoln lived and laboured; it was for this Abraham Lincoln died, the martyr of freedom. May this glorious example be as a beacon light to his successor. . . .

Accept, people of America, the pledge of sympathy, and the hand of fellowship and fraternity, from the working men of England's great metropolis.<sup>34</sup>

After the second resolution and address had been adopted, the meeting turned to some of the immediate problems facing British workers at home. Speakers emphasized that, despite the great sacrifices and contributions of British workers to the victory of freedom, they were still spoken of scornfully in the House of Commons. Leicester insisted, to "loud cheers," that this would continue "until they were represented in that House. Let them then urge on the cause of freedom, and never relax in their efforts until their end was obtained, and freedom's battle fully won."<sup>35</sup>

Professor Beesly then announced that there would be a large meeting in the same hall within a week to renew the demand for the suffrage, and he called upon all workingmen to attend and join actively in the mass agitation to "give the people at large the right of the suffrage":

America had set them an example how this matter could be managed. It was a spark from America that lit up the great French Revolution, and if they prosecuted the cause now with determination and vigour, they might endure a state of things the like of which they had not seen since the days of Cromwell (*loud cheers*).<sup>36</sup>

There were now loud cries from the audience for Reverend Newman Hall of the Southwark district of London, known for his sympathy for and cooperation with the workers of his area. Coming forward, Hall declared that he understood that "this was exclusively a working-class meeting," and that properly he should say nothing—but he could not refrain from telling both the British and American people a fundamental truth. With this, he proceeded to close the last mass meeting of British labor on the Civil War on this note:

The working men of England have been right all through the struggle. While the foremost senators in the House of Commons uttered sentiments calculated

to enbroil the two nations in war, the working classes never uttered a word that would lead to anything but harmony (*cheers*).<sup>37</sup>

Nothing equal to the London St. Martin's Hall meeting took place in Lancashire, although there were smaller gatherings at which workingmen voiced their grief over Lincoln's assassination and sent condolences to his widow and congratulations to the people of America over the triumph of the Union over the Slave Power.<sup>38</sup> (These were forwarded by Minister Adams to the government of the United States.) Moreover, at the final meeting of the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester, in addition to celebrating the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which abolished slavery in every part of the nation, a tribute was read from "Friends of Freedom" all over England. It paid homage to "the workingmen of Manchester" for having "boldly" come forward at a time "when the friends of Freedom and good government in this country were too generally silent and inactive in regard to the Slaveholders' Rebellion in the Southern States of America" and having formed "this Association which proclaimed as cardinal points the maintenance of the Federal Union, and the abolition of Negro slavery in the United States." This, in turn, had led to the formation of similar societies by workingmen in other parts of Lancashire, and partially as a result of the work of the Manchester Society and the others, the efforts of the "sympathizers with the Slave Power" to convince the workingmen of Lancashire that it was to their interest to support "the so-called Confederacy" had failed, and the American people should be convinced that the majority of these workingmen "were as true as ever in their admiration of free institutions and their hatred of slavery."<sup>39</sup>

As reports of meetings of English workingmen voicing their grief over Lincoln's assassination and their joy over the triumph of the forces of freedom in the United States multiplied, the American labor press, in addition to publishing extracts from the speeches and resolutions, devoted editorials to the entire subject of the role of British labor during the war just completed. There was general agreement that the British workers had written some of the most glorious pages in the history of the working class of the world, and that in the "defeat of slavery, the principle of democracy had triumphed, and the benefits would redound to the cause of British labor as well as that of labor in the United States."<sup>40</sup> But the *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, an outstanding labor paper established by striking printers who had been locked out of their jobs toward the end of the war, went further than the usual tribute in its editorial, "Our Brethren in England":

Whatever may have been revealed *among certain* classes who have furnished the rebels with the means of carrying on the war, however ungenerous a part of their government may have acted, the workingmen of England have been in hearty sympathy with the loyal people of the United States. They seem to understand better than some of our own citizens the true meaning of the war. In our success they see a cheering sign of hope to all the sons of toil.<sup>41</sup>

American labor papers universally credited the British workers with

having prevented the Palmerston government from intervening in favor of the South. Historians may have begun to question this conclusion, but the importance of the stand taken by British workers during the war is clearly implied in Jasper Ridley's recently published biography of Lord Palmerston, already a classic of its kind. "Palmerston," he writes, "in the great battle between freedom and slavery, threw all his weight into the scales on the side of slavery. If he did not actually seek a war with the North, he was not reluctant to be drawn into war, and he did all he could, short of war, to injure the Northern cause."<sup>42</sup> We may fairly conclude that Marx was correct when he noted that it was the "*pressure from without*" of British labor that persuaded the prime minister to become reluctant "to be drawn into war."

In reporting the meeting at St. Martin's Hall, the *Boston Daily Evening Voice* observed that it was fitting that from this meeting—the last held by British workers on the Civil War—there should have emerged a mass movement in conjunction with Radicals, with the immediate goal of achieving "the democratic right of suffrage."<sup>43</sup> Its reference was to the establishment of the Reform League, in which a group of middle-class Radicals combined with six workers—all members of the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association—to form the Permanent Committee of the organization, which revived the old Chartist demand for universal manhood suffrage.

At first the trade unionists had acted independently to achieve the ballot, and in 1862, the London Trades' Council, under the influence of the Junta, had created the Trade Union Political Union, with a program of the "Ballot and Universal Suffrage." Then, during the course of the struggle to prevent intervention on the side of the Confederacy and to support the North, trade union leaders and old Chartists such as Ernest Jones, joined with middle-class Radicals like John Bright, Richard Cobden, and Edmund Beales. The cooperation between the trade unionists and the middle-class Radicals next carried over into the movement for the suffrage.<sup>44</sup> Shortly after the great St. James' Hall meeting, which he had chaired, John Bright wrote to W. R. Cremcr, secretary of the Workmen's Committee established after that meeting to advance the cause of the North:

At this moment there is little political action in England, and all eyes and hearts turn naturally to the scene of the American contest—but a change will come, and it may come soon—and when it does come, I hope you and your friends will be ready to make an effort for the extension of political rights to the people of the United Kingdom.

For this great object my services will be always at your disposal.<sup>45</sup>

The "change" did come, and the Manhood Suffrage and Vote by Ballot Association, the new name of the Trade Union Political Union, broadened its base and became the National Reform League, with Edmund Beales as president and George Howell as secretary. While it opened its ranks to middle-class supporters, it continued to be "essentially a working-class body, based mainly on Trade Union affiliations throughout the country."

Although conflict developed among the labor groups—George Potter tried, but failed, to gain control of the Reform League's Permanent Committee, and founded his own London Working Men's Association—the new movement for Manhood Suffrage and the Ballot finally triumphed with the passage of the Reform Act of 1867. All six of the trade unionists associated with the leadership of the Reform League had been active in support of the Union cause throughout the Civil War, convinced, like Ernest Jones and John Bright, that a triumph over slavery in the United States would help usher in a new era for British labor.<sup>46</sup> Here is how W. E. Lunt puts it in his *History of England*:

The recent triumph of the Northern states in the American Civil War had demonstrated that the opinions of the laborers might be more sound than those of the ruling class. It had also shattered the belief, entertained by many of the ruling class, that a democratic government was bound to fail in the end. What was more important, the workingmen had finally formed large and efficient associations to agitate for reform. . . . Another factor was the support given to the movement by the trade unions. Since 1842 many unions had improved their organization and efficiency, but they had not previously attempted to exert political influence. In 1866 many of them were associated with one of the large organizations engaged in propaganda for electoral reform. . . .

Between 1832 and 1867 the number of voters had increased from one in thirty of the population to one in twenty-two. The act of 1867 nearly doubled that figure. The rural wage earners were still largely excluded from the franchise, but the largest part of the working class had been admitted.<sup>47</sup>

It is only fitting to record, too, in concluding our discussion of British labor and the American Civil War, that while workers in Europe were mobilizing for their own freedom, they did not lose sight of the need to advance further the freedom of the emancipated slaves in the United States. At the conference of the First International in London in 1865, the delegates commemorated the founding of the International Workingmen's Association and celebrated the triumph of national unity and free labor in the United States. Out of these deliberations came an address to the American people, written by Karl Marx, dated September 25, 1865. It exhorted the American people to fully emancipate the Negroes if they wished to secure the nation against future convulsions:

Injustice against a fraction of your people having been followed by such consequences, put an end to it. Declare your fellow citizens from this day forth free and equal, without any reserve. If you refuse them citizens' rights while you exact from them citizens' duties, you will sooner or later face a new struggle which will once more drench your country in blood. . . .

We therefore admonish you, as brothers in a common cause, to sunder all the chains of freedom, and your victory will be complete.<sup>48</sup>

## 9. Epilogue

In 1869–1870, war between the United States and Great Britain loomed imminently on the horizon. The issue that threatened to hurl the two nations into bloody conflict was that of the "Alabama Claims," involving a British-built ship, among others of British manufacture, which had been sold to the Confederate government and which had done considerable damage to federal shipping. Forces in the United States pressed inordinate demands for restitution upon Great Britain, including even the turning over of Canada in satisfaction of United States claims. The two governments were both angry and belligerent.

As the danger of war mounted, three groups in England, representing the working class, acted to prevent the crisis from plunging the two nations into war. The first to act was the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association. On May 12, 1869, it sent an address to the National Labor Union in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Written by Karl Marx, it began:

Fellow workmen,

In the initiatory programme of our Association, we stated: "It is not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic." Your turn has now come to stop a war, the clearest result of which would be, for an indefinite period, to hurl back the ascendant movement of the working class on both sides of the Atlantic.

After pointing out that it was only in the interests of "our common oppressors to turn our fast-growing international co-operation into an internecine war," the address returned to the Civil War in the United States, and noted:

In our congratulatory address to Mr. Lincoln on his reelection as president, we expressed our conviction that the American civil war would prove of as great import to the advancement of the working class as the American war of independence had proved to that of the middle class. And, in point of fact, the victorious termination of the anti-slavery war has opened a new epoch in the annals of the working class. In the States themselves, an independent working-class movement, looked upon with an evil eye by your old parties and their

professional politicians, has since that date sprung into life.<sup>2</sup> To fructify it wants years of peace. To crush it, a war between the United States and England is wanted.

There were other results of the Civil War in the United States that were not so fruitful for the working classes, the address continued, such as the increase in the national debt, prices that shot up much faster and higher than wages, and the fact that "the sufferings of the working classes set off as a foil the new-fangled luxury of financial aristocrats, shoddy aristocrats, and similar vermin bred by wars":

Yet for all this, the civil war did compensate by freeing the slave and the consequent moral impetus it gave to your own class movements. A second war, not hallowed by a sublime purpose and a great social necessity, but of the Old World's type, would forge chains for the free labourer instead of tearing asunder those of the slave.

The address closed with one of Marx's most eloquent appeals:

On you, then, devolves the glorious task to prove to the world that now at last the working classes are bestriding the scene of history no longer as servile retainers, but as independent actors, conscious of their own responsibility, and able to command peace where their would-be masters shout war.

The address was published in the *Bee-Hive* of May 15, 1869, and was distributed as a leaflet by the General Council.<sup>3</sup>

Next to act was the Workmen's Peace Association, established late in 1869, which issued, as one of its first acts, an address to the workingmen of the United States, urging them to press upon their government the desirability of withdrawing unreasonable claims and settling the *Alabama* dispute by arbitration. The address recalled the role played by the British workingmen during the Civil War and reminded the Americans that, while the rulers of England favored the cause of the South and slavery,

The working classes of this country in all the great towns declared in emphatic language their sympathy with your cause, and their determination that Britain should not interfere in your struggle. Semi-starvation in our cotton districts, and the lavish expenditure of gold raised by the Confederates were not powerful enough to compel or bribe the masses or their leaders to desert the cause. Many of those who now address you took an active part in organising the demonstrations of that period. At that time, but a fraction of us possessed the franchise, and therefore had no direct power of controlling the actions of our Government. But we stood resolutely by you in the hour of danger, and counterbalanced the efforts of aristocratic supporters of the slavepower—protesting against the remissness of our Government in allowing the *Alabama* to escape. We are therefore not morally responsible for the damage done by that vessel.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, the Representation League met in London and adopted an "Address to the Workingmen of America" on the impending war danger and forwarded it to the principal newspapers in England and the United

States. This address called attention to the fact that, with respect to the "disputed claims connected with your late unhappy civil war," politicians on both sides of the Atlantic were acting in a manner which, if not checked, could drench the two countries in blood, even though it was clear that these were "claims which can and should be settled in a spirit of equity to both nations." After pointing out that the British people were being told that "through low party considerations" in the United States, a reasonable solution was becoming impossible, the appeal declared:

The workingmen of England appeal to you with confidence, and ask you to refute by your conduct an imputation so damaging to your country's honour. We make this appeal the more confidently because we feel certain you will not mistake our motives. Whoever may have wronged you while you were contending for the destruction of slavery and the preservation of your national life, the workingmen of England were royally, determinedly, and unswervingly on your side. The privations brought upon them by your war they bore with patience, being convinced that their willing sacrifices for your cause was an element of strength to your government. In the same spirit of brotherly affection for your people and admiration of your free institutions, they now call on you to defeat the schemes and intrigues of party politicians.<sup>5</sup>

The appeals were received, and the National Labor Union, individual trade unions, and American sections of the First International added their voices to those seeking a peaceful solution of the crisis. In the end, this was achieved, as the United States Senate established an impartial commission, composed of Swiss, Brazilians, and Italians, in addition to Americans and British, which decided, the following year, that although Great Britain bore financial responsibility for the damage, the United States should be compensated more modestly than was being demanded by some of her political leaders. The United States received fifteen and one-half million dollars, but more important, the danger of war was averted.

In responding to the appeals of the Workmen's Peace Association and the Labor Representation League, the National Labor Union noted their reference to the contributions and sacrifices of the British workers during the American Civil War and observed correctly that these workers had proved, by their conduct, that "the interests of the working class are universal."<sup>6</sup>

In 1884, while another Reform bill extending manhood suffrage still further was being debated in Parliament, a great demonstration for the franchise took place in Kilmarnock. Workers gathered from all parts of Ayrshire, and over six hundred of them, mostly weavers, came from Newmilns, one of the mill districts which had been most severely affected by the blockade. The Newmilns weavers carried aloft two flags. One was a flag of 1831, "with the words, 'Reform, good laws, cheap government!'" inscribed on the standard. The other, which according to the press "attracted more attention," was the flag of the United States. It had been presented by President Abraham Lincoln, through the U.S. Ministry in England, to John Donald of Newmilns. Donald, a Chartist and a staunch defender of the North,

had organized a meeting of weavers, most of them unemployed, and from this gathering, resolutions of support for the Union and an appeal for the total abolition of slavery had been forwarded to Washington.

Two decades later, that same flag, symbolizing the appreciation of Abraham Lincoln for the sacrifices and contributions of the weavers of Newmilns, was being borne aloft proudly by their descendants in a great demonstration for suffrage.<sup>7</sup>

## Notes

### Chapter One

1. William H. Seward to Charles Francis Adams, April 18, 1861, in Records of the Department of State, G.B. 17: 378–392, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
2. James Truslow Adams, *The Adams Family* (Boston, 1930) p. 253; *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (Boston, 1930) p. 113.
3. See especially Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams, Dec. 13, 1861, in *A Cycle of Adams' Letters*, vol. I, Worthington C. Ford, ed., (Boston, 1920) pp. 83–85.
4. Martin Duberman, *Charles Francis Adams, 1807–1886* (Stanford, Calif., 1960) pp. 260–261.
5. Louis Blanc, *Lettres sur l'Angleterre*, vol. I, lettre xix (Paris, 1886); *London Times*, Nov. 7, 1861.
6. J. A. Hobson, *Richard Cobden, the International Man* (London, 1919) p. 368; Richard Cobden to Charles Sumner, Nov. 29, Dec. 5, 1861, in Charles Sumner Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
7. Blanc, *Lettres*, lettre xxii.
8. Thomas Ellison, *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain* (London, 1886) pp. 86–89. The *Punch* jingle is reprinted in Belle Becker Sideman and Lillian Friedman, editors, *Europe Looks at the Civil War* (New York, 1960) pp. 36–37.
9. E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861–1865*, vol. VII of the *History of the South*, ed. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter (Baton Rouge, La., 1950) pp. 177–178.
10. Henrietta Buckmaster, *Let My People Go* (New York, 1941) p. 69.
11. Eugene A. Brady, "A Reconsideration of the Lancashire 'Cotton Famine,'" *Agricultural History* XXXVI (1962) 156–163.
12. Ellison, *The Cotton Trade*, p. 95; W. O. Henderson, *The Lancashire Cotton Famine, 1861–1865* (Manchester, England, 1934) p. 126.
13. Arthur W. Silver, "Efforts to Secure a Cotton Supply in the British Empire, 1850–1872" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1952) pp. 174–176.
14. John Harland, coll., comp., and ed., *Ballads & Songs of Lancashire: Ancient and Modern*, 2nd ed. (London, 1875) pp. 491, 493.
15. "The Diary of John Ward of Clitheroe, Weaver, 1860–1864" (intro. by R. Sharpe Franc), in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire For the Year 1953*, vol. CV (Liverpool, 1954) p. 176.
16. Duberman, *Charles Francis Adams*, p. 292.

17. The most recent study of the *Trent* affair, which is quite critical of Lincoln's handling of the incident, is Norman B. Ferris, *The Trent Affair: A Diplomatic Crisis* (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1977). For earlier studies, see E. D. Adams, *Britain and the Civil War*, vol. I (New York, 1925) pp. 200-235; Duberman, *Charles Francis Adams*, pp. 278-281; Kenneth Bourne, "British Preparations for War with the North, 1861-1862," *English Historical Review* LXVI (October, 1961) pp. 572-603.

18. Bourne, "British Preparations for War," pp. 598-602. The practice was carried on in face of the fact that Great Britain was officially neutral and international law forbade the construction of naval vessels for belligerent nations. A total of eighteen of these "pirate" ships preyed on Northern shipping. The *Alabama* was the most successful of them. In 1863 the English stopped this practice after the North threatened to send a "flood of privateers" against British shipping. However, great damage had already been done. The "Alabama Claims" upon England by the United States for shipping losses suffered during the Civil War led, in 1871, to a crisis which appeared to threaten war between the two countries, but it was settled in 1872. Under the terms of the settlement negotiated through arbitration, England paid \$15.5 million to the United States.

19. Louis Bernard Schmidt, "The Influence of Wheat and Cotton in Anglo-American Relations during the Civil War," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* XVI (1918) pp. 426-438; Coulter, *The Confederate States*, pp. 187-188.

20. Butler owned seven hundred slaves and he warned his wife that if she did not stop sticking up for them, the house might be burned down—"a favourite mode of remonstrance in these parts," she reported, "with those who advocate the rights of unhappy blacks." (London, 1863, p. 144.) Kemble's memoir was published in the United States eight weeks after it appeared in England.

21. Allan Nevins, *The War for the Union*, vol. II (New York, 1960) pp. 264-265.

22. Stanley Broadbridge, "The Lancashire Cotton 'Famine,' 1861-1865," in *The Luddites and other Essays*, ed. Lionel M. Munby (London, 1971) pp. 143-153.

23. Norman Longmate, *The Hungry Mills* (London, 1977).

## Chapter Two

1. London *Daily News*, January 28, 1862.

2. For Marx's writings on the American Civil War, as well as those of Friedrich Engels, see Richard Ennalec, ed., *The Civil War in the United States by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (New York, 1937), and *Karl Marx on America and the Civil War*, arranged and edited with an introduction and new translations, by Saul K. Padover (New York, 1972).

3. *Die Presse*, February 2, 1862, reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 139-143.

4. Marx to Weydemeyer, November 29, 1864, in Leonard E. Mins, *Founding of the First International* (New York, 1937) p. 51.

5. Ennalec, *Civil War in the United States by Marx and Engels*, p. 241.

6. For contemporary opinion similar to Marx's during the Civil War, see *Saturday Review*, May 17, 1862; speeches of Mr. Gilpin, Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Foster, *London Times*, January 15, 1862, February 5, 1863, September 23, 1863; Moncure D. Conway in *Boston Commonwealth*, April 29, 1864; George Thompson to William Lloyd Garrison, February 5, 1863, in *William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879*, vol. IV, F. J. and W. P. Garrison (New York and London, 1887) p. 75; Louis Blanc, *Lettres*, lettres cxii and cxli; Richard Cobden in *Rochdale Observer*, May 2, 1865.

7. See Robert Arthur Arnold, *The History of the Cotton Famine* (London, 1865); John Watts, *The Facts of the Cotton Famine* (London, 1866) chapters viii-x; "Autobiography" of Samuel Fielden, in *The Autobiographies of the Haymarket Martyrs* ed. Philip S. Foner (New York, 1969) pp. 143-145.

8. Ennalec, *Civil War in the United States by Marx and Engels*, pp. 45, 47-49.

9. American historians who, to a greater or lesser extent, have reflected the traditional view of the role of British workers during the Civil War include Hermann Schlüter, *Lincoln, Labor and Slavery*, chapter V-VI (New York, 1913); Joseph H. Park, "The English Working-man and the American Civil War," *Political Science Quarterly* XXXIX (1924) pp. 432-457; E. D. Adams, *Great Britain and the Civil War*, vol. II (New York, 1925) pp. 274, 288-289; E. D. Jordan and E. O. Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.) pp. 17, 48, 87, 145-147; James G. Randall, "Lincoln and John Bright," in *American History: Recent Interpretations*, ed., Abraham S. Eisenstadt (New York, 1962) p. 474 (article originally published in 1947); Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, vol. I (New York, 1947) pp. 313-316; Richard Greenleaf, "British Labor Against American Slavery," *Science & Society* XVII (1953) pp. 53-65; Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 5th ed. (New York, 1955) p. 370; Bernard Mandel, *Labor: Free and Slave* (New York, 1955).

For a review of the historical literature, see Thomas J. Pressly, *Americans Interpret Their Civil War* (Princeton, N.J., 1954). British historians who, to a greater or lesser extent, have reflected the traditional view include George Howell, *Labour Legislation, Labour Movements and Labour Leaders* (London, 1902) p. 41; George M. Trevelyan, *A Short History of England* (reprinted Baltimore, 1960) p. 496; A. L. Morton, *A People's History of England* (London, 1938) pp. 412-413; John Saville, ed., *Ernest Jones: Chartist* (London, 1959) p. 79; Max Beloff, "Great Britain and the American Civil War," *History* XXXVIII (February, 1952) p. 44; H. M. Pelling, *America and the British Left* (London, 1956) pp. 7-8; Asa Briggs, *Victorian People: A Reassessment of Persons and Themes, 1851-1867* (New York and Evanston, 1963) p. 223.

10. Friedrich A. Sorge, *Labor Movement in the United States: A History of the American Working Class from Colonial Times to 1890*, trans. Brewster Chamberlin and Angela Chamberlin, ed., Philip S. Foner and Brewster Chamberlin, (intro. by Philip S. Foner) (Westport, Conn., 1977) pp. 103-104.

11. Richard B. Morris, ed., *Encyclopedia of American History* (New York, 1953), p. 233.

12. Frank Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy* (Chicago, 1931, reprinted Chicago, 1959) pp. 544-546. For a criticism of Owsley, see Pelling, *America and the British Left*, p. 8, n.2; W. D. Jones, "British Conservatives and the American Civil War," *American Historical Review* LVIII (April, 1953) pp. 527-543.

13. H. C. Ailen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations* (London, 1954) p. 452.

14. J. M. Hernon, Jr., "British Sympathies in the American Civil War," *Journal of Southern History* XXXIII (August 1967) pp. 365-367.

15. Allan Nevins, *The War for the Union*, vol. II (New York, 1960) pp. 264-265.

16. J. M. Hernon, Jr., *Celts, Catholics, and Copperheads: Ireland Views the American Civil War* (Columbus, Ohio, 1968). This is the published version of the 1957 dissertation.

17. Sheldon Van Auken, "English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy: The Glittering Illusion" (B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1957) pp. iv-v.

18. Frank Thistlewaite, *The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1959) pp. 19-20.

19. Royden Harrison, "British Labour and the Confederacy," *International Review of Social History* II (1957) pp. 78-79.

20. Martin P. Claussen, "Peace Factors in Anglo-American Relations," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* XXXVI (September, 1949), pp. 121-122.

21. The editorials were by George Troup, to whom George Potter, manager of the *Bee-Hive*, entrusted the editorial page.

22. Harrison, "British Labour," p. 81.

23. Ibid., pp. 82-83.

24. Ibid., pp. 83-84.

25. It is interesting to note in this connection that Marx himself spoke of "twofold slavery" in a letter to the New York *Tribune* of October 14, 1861. He put it as follows: As long as the English cotton manufacturers depended on slave-grown cotton, it could truthfully be asserted that they rested on a twofold slavery, the indirect slavery of the white man in England and the direct slavery of the black man on the other side of the Atlantic." However, Marx did not equate chattel slavery with wage slavery, and he believed profoundly that the interests of all wage workers, both in the United States and Europe, were linked to the victory of the North over the slavemongering Confederacy. Nevertheless, in *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context 1830-1860*, Marcus Cunliffe incorrectly writes that "Karl Marx stressed the parallel between the old structure of chattel slavery and the newer wage slavery equivalent" (Athens, Georgia, p. 12). Cunliffe states, too, that during the American Civil War, British workingmen "were to be placed on record as endorsing the Union cause." But he adds that "recent scholarship has considerably modified the notion that while the British aristocracy leaned to the Confederacy, the lower classes were staunchly committed to emancipation and to Union victory. In truth, many remained suspicious of American conduct, and continued to accuse antislavery leaders of hypocrisy." (*Ibid.*, p. 19.) This judgment is based mainly on Mary Ellison's *Support for Secession*. But Cunliffe does not appear to realize that it was possible to be "suspicious of American conduct and . . . accuse antislavery leaders of hypocrisy," and still remain "staunchly committed to emancipation and to Union victory."

26. Garrison, "British Labour," pp. 91-96.

27. Royden Harrison, "British Labor and American Slavery," *Science & Society* XXV (1961) pp. 315-316.

28. Garrison, "British Labor and the Confederacy," p. 90.

29. Garrison, "British Labor and American Slavery," p. 319.

30. *Ibid.*

31. See the editorial comments in the *Bulletin of the British Association for American Studies*, no. 4 (Autumn, 1959), pp. 11-12.

32. Royden Harrison, ed., *The English Defence of the Commune* (London, 1971) p. 10.

33. E. R. Poole, *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Class of Britain* (London, 1960) pp. 10-12. In an earlier history of the London Trades' Council, there is no qualification of British labor support for the North. The sole point emphasized is that the role of the British workingmen on behalf of the Union "fanned the flames of Radical enthusiasm" for the democratic North. *London Trades' Council, 1860-1950: A History*, foreword by Julius Jacobs (London, 1950) pp. 28-29.

34. Poole, *Abraham Lincoln*, p. 12.

35. J. M. Hernon, Jr., "British Sympathies in the American Civil War," *Journal of Southern History* XXXIII (August, 1967) pp. 361-362.

36. Michael Brook, "Confederate Sympathies in North East Lancashire, 1862-1864," *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* LXXV-LXXVI (1965-1966) pp. 211-217.

37. Brian Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union*, vol. 1 (Montreal, London, 1973) p. 304. There is no discussion, however, of the role of the British workers in Peter J. Parish, *The American Civil War* (New York, 1975).

38. Mary Ellison, *Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War* (epilogue by Peter d'A. Jones) (Chicago, 1972).

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 28, 30.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 196. Ellison forgets to mention that the controversy over the use of slaves in the Confederate Army waxed hot and heavy, and that it was only at the very end, when defeat clearly stared the South in the face, that a decision was made to use them. The chief objection to the use of slaves was that it contradicted the entire foundation on which the Confederacy was based, namely, that the Negro was not the equal of the white man and was only

suitably to be a slave. See Bell I. Wiley, *Southern Negroes, 1861-1865* (New Haven, 1961) pp. 322-328.

42. This is also the case with other materials used. Thus, she cites the fact that when Henry Adams visited Manchester in November, 1861, "he was convinced that, before a long, a party in the city would demand the breaking of the blockade." This conclusion was "partly influenced" by the "premonitions" of a member of a large firm of spinners and the editor of a leading Manchester paper (probably the *Manchester Examiner and Times*). (*Ibid.*, p. 160.) But Ellison neglects to mention that several merchants and manufacturers assured Adams that anyone who told him that "the people of Manchester wished the government to break the blockade" was simply wrong, and that "the feeling in Manchester" was "one of sympathy with the Union." (Arthur W. Silver, "Henry Adams' Diary of a Visit to Manchester," *American Historical Review* LI (October, 1946) pp. 81-82.)

43. Ellison, *Support for Secession*, pp. 34, 77.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 99, 102.

48. See p. 71.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 153n.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 154n., citing *Manchester Guardian*, July 18, 1863.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

53. Perhaps that is what Dr. Ellison meant when she told me during a hurried meeting at the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History meeting in Washington, D.C. in October, 1977, that she did not endorse all of Jones's conclusions.

54. Ellison, *Support for Secession*, p. 201.

55. Gladstone made these remarks in the course of a speech on the distress in Lancashire, entitled, "The Working Classes and the Cotton Crisis," delivered at the Chester Music Hall, December 27, 1862. See pp. 4-5 of the pamphlet, Preston, 1863 (?).

56. Ellison, *Support for Secession*, p. 203. Like Ellison, Jones omits material in Henry Adams's account of his visit to Manchester which contradicts this thesis. Thus, he wrote that Adams found men in the Manchester cotton trade "unsympathetic to the Union." (*Ibid.*, p. 202.) Actually, Adams reported that most of them were very sympathetic to the Union, and only one or two expressed a different point of view. (See Silver, "Henry Adams' Diary" pp. 81-82.)

57. Ellison, *Support for Secession*, p. 205.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

60. What may be the classic example of this trend is reflected in the enthusiastic reviews that greeted the "Sambo Personality" thesis of Stanley Elkins in his 1959 *Slavery*. Elkins advanced the thesis that the brutality of American slavery had converted the proud, strong, and militant African into an infantile person, submissive, given to lying and stealing, and without any ability to resist the institution. This he defined as the "Sambo Personality," a personality, he declared, that described the "typical plantation slave." Although this denigrating assessment of black workers, camouflaged by a critical evaluation of the nature of American slavery, was based on absolutely no fundamental evidence and was nothing more than a hypothesis, it was hailed as having shed fresh light on American Negro slavery.

61. "Guardian Books," *The Guardian* (April 6, 1978) p. 7.

62. In Francis Nicholson, Jr., *Canadian Review of American Studies* IV (Fall, 1973), pp. 197-200.

## Chapter Three

1. As proof of his assertion, Cosmopolitan predicted that the Civil War would end "with the emancipation of the blacks" and their return to Africa, which would open a new field for "the labour of the until now despised 'poor whites,' as they are called there, the wretched, starving, nonslave-holding citizens." In England, the war would "hasten the solution of the social problem," as the working classes would become "more earnest in their study of the question whether it is proper that their life should be jeopardized by the fluctuations of the labour market." Finally, he voiced regret that any Englishman might decide to enlist in the Confederate army and "fight for slavery." But he was confident that "if one goes for slavery, thousands will run to the rescue of liberty." (*National Cooperative Leader* [London] May 17, 1861.)

2. It is not exactly clear, however, as to just what constituted a labor paper. Thus, in its prospectus, *The Working Man*, which began publication in London at this very time, viewed itself as the first real organ of the British working class. "Every influential class," the prospectus declared, "is represented in the press. The army and navy, the aristocracy of the land or of the mills, the mercantile interest, the different churches, the volunteers—each have their advocates, and have their interests defended by organs of all shapes and of all prices; but the class (since, unfortunately, men are divided into classes), which, by its number and its productive power, is at the root of everything—the working classes—have, until now, had no organ really their own." "The WORKING MAN," it concluded, "is intended to be the *Working Man's Newspaper*, in fact as well as in spirit. (*The Working Man* [London] August 2, 1861.)

3. *Reynolds' Newspaper* was not alone in raising this issue. Other newspapers, too, criticized the cotton trade of Lancashire for its continued refusal to support efforts, sponsored by the Manchester Cotton Supply Association (started by some far-sighted members of the cotton trade in 1857), directed at securing alternative sources for the supply of cotton, and in this way becoming less dependent on the United States. (Isaac Watts, *The Cotton Supply Association* [Manchester, 1871] pp. 126–130; W. O. Henderson, "The Cotton Supply Association," *Empire Cotton Growing Review* [April, 1932] pp. 23–24; Arthur W. Silver, "Efforts to Secure a Cotton Supply in the British Empire, 1850–1872," [Ph.D. diss. Yale University, 1942] pp. 130–135.)

Before the Civil War, British textile manufacturers looked principally to India as offering a possible alternative supply of raw material, but the "British free produce movement together with certain missionary and commercial interests regarded West Africa as a potentially more important cotton-growing area." (Louis Billington, "British Humanitarians and American Cotton, 1840–1860," *Journal of American Studies*, vol. XI, no. 3 [Cambridge, England] pp. 332–333.)

4. Black American emigrationist leaders in the late 1850s, especially Reverend Henry Highland Garnet and Martin R. Delany, believed that growing and selling free labor cotton from Africa would not only make fortunes for young black entrepreneurs from the United States, but supply the European market so well that Southerners would be forced by economic self-interest to end slavery. Garnet knew from his own experience in England that British textile interests would welcome an effort to develop cotton growing in West Africa. When Delany came to England in 1860 from Yoruba where he had negotiated treaties with African chiefs for the settlement of black Americans, he was able to persuade a number of industrialists and antislavery men to support and promote his emigration scheme. The African Aid Society was founded in July, 1860, with the express purpose of promoting emigration to Yoruba. Lancashire and Scottish cotton manufacturers supported the plan on the grounds that a successful colony could provide them with an alternative source of cotton and relieve their dependence on the South. At a time when talk of secession and Civil War in the United States was widespread, Richard Blackett points out, Delany's plan "came as a godsend to the English cotton interest."

Nothing, however, came of the ideas and plans. Hopes of settling the Yoruba area with black Americans were shattered by a bitter controversy that developed over the legality of the treaty signed with the African chiefs. British enemies of the proposed settlement, mainly the traders who feared the breaking up of their near-monopoly of commerce in Yoruba, pressured the chiefs of the Abeokuta to repudiate the treaty.

See Richard K. McMaster, "Henry Highland Garnet and the American Civilization Society," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, vol. 48 (January, 1970), pp. 101–103; Joel Schor, *Henry Highland Garnet: A Voice of Black Radicalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Westport, Conn., 1977) pp. 155–157; Richard Blackett, "Martin R. Delany and Robert Campbell: Black Americans in Search of an African Colony," *Journal of Negro History*, vol. 62 (January, 1980) pp. 16–24.

5. *The Working Man*, August 22, 29, 1861.

7. *Ibid.*, August 1, September 1, 1862.

7. *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, May 6, 1865. The 1864 extracts were from a series of leaders and letters by George Troup (whom, the handbill charged, Potter had been forced to discharge but then brought back on the editorial staff), and dealt mainly with reasons why British workers should not emigrate to the United States, which was described as being "on the verge of ruin." (Issue of February 20, 1864, reprinted in *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, May 6, 1865.)

8. For the origins of the *Bee-Hive*, see Stephen Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper" (Ph.D. diss., University College, England, 1956) pp. 5–74. For a brief summary of this material, see his article, "The 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper: Its Origins and Early Struggles," in Asa Briggs and John Saville, eds., *Essays in Labour History* (London, 1960) pp. 195–210.

9. Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," p. 68.

10. Coltham is incorrect when he says that "all the quotations in the handbill were dated 1861." (*Ibid.*, p. 71.) A few were from 1864.

11. *Bee-Hive*, November 8, 1862.

12. Delegates were present from the following societies: Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Running Horses, Silver Cup, Brickmakers, Basketmakers, Bookbinders, Kensington Bootmakers, West End Ladies' Shoemakers, Zincworkers, Tin Plateworkers, Silver Spoon-makers, Progressive Society of Carpenters, City Bootmakers, Friends of Freedom Society of Carpenters, Adam and Eve Society of Carpenters, Stonemasons, Parasolmakers, Carvers and Gilders, Iron Shipbuilders, Windmill Society of Carpenters, North London Society of Carpenters, Letterpress Printers, Ropemakers, City Ladies' Shoemakers, Plumbers, Brass Finishers, and Chelsea Shoemakers, along with a delegation from the Trades' Newspaper Company and the Bookbinders at Mr. Burns' Halton-garden. (*Bee-Hive*, November 29, 1862.)

13. *Ibid.*

14. Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," pp. 71–72. The only part Potter played at the meeting was to introduce a resolution establishing the meeting into a committee to be called "The London Working Men's Central Committee," for the purpose of collecting subscriptions "for the relief of the distressed operatives in the North." The resolution was adopted unanimously. (*Bee-Hive*, November 29, 1862.)

15. Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," pp. 72–73.

16. This did not mean that Howells believed that blacks were equal to whites in every area of life. He pointed out that they had been deprived of education, since it was a punishable offense in the South "to teach slaves to read." But he was convinced that with freedom, blacks would overcome these disadvantages: "Give him freedom, surround him with healthier circumstances, and you will develop in the slave a manlier life." ("The North Versus the South," *Bee-Hive*, January 24, 1863.)

17. *Ibid.*

18. Frederick Douglass was in England in 1845 and 1860. For an account of his activities in England and the reaction to his visits, see Philip S. Foner, *Frederick Douglass* (New York, 1965), pp. 44–50, 128–132.

19. Frederick Douglass, "The Slave's Appeal to Great Britain," *The Independent*, November 20, 1862, and reprinted in Philip S. Foner, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, vol. III, *The Civil War, 1861–1865* (New York, 1952), pp. 299–305.

20. *Jersey Independent and Daily Telegraph*, Jersey, November 29, 1862.
21. Harney left England to begin a new career in the United States. In introducing him to Theodore Tilton, editor of *The Independent*, William Lloyd Garrison, the great Boston abolitionist, described him as "an able and efficient advocate of the cause of the American government against Rebellion and its British allies," and a man who had "felt obliged to withdraw from his editorial post on account of the 'secesh' sentiments of the proprietor of his paper." (Garrison to Tilton, Boston, September 9, 1863, in Frank Gees Black and Renée Metwier Black, eds., *The Harney Papers*, Asscn, 1969, p. 198.) *The Independent* was the monthly magazine that published Frederick Douglass's "The Slave's Appeal to Great Britain."
22. George Julian Harney to Charles Sumner, December 10, 1862, in *ibid.*, p. 110.
23. On December 24, 1862, Henry Richardson, the British abolitionist who had inserted the "Appeal" in the London *Daily News* (after which it was reprinted widely in England, Scotland, and Ireland) wrote to Douglass: "I quite think there is a turn of the tide observable, and that the Northern States are beginning to be looked upon with some favour. Your appeal has doubtless helped in this change." Alexander Innes also wrote to Douglass from England, assuring him that his "Appeal" was being read in working-class circles and was having a "profound effect" in Lancashire, as well as in other parts of the British Isles. (Henry Richardson to Frederick Douglass, December 4, 1862; Alexander Innes to Douglass, December 23, 1862, *Frederick Douglass Papers*, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.) For Frederick Douglass's influence in England on British working-class opposition to slavery before the outbreak of the Civil War, see John W. Blasingame, ed., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series One, volume 1, 1841-1846 (New Haven, Conn., 1979) pp. 398-400.
24. J. R. Poole, *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain* (London, 1960) p. 12.
25. *London Times*, January 5, 1862.

#### Chapter Four

1. *Blackburn Patriot*, July 5, 1862.
  2. *Ibid.*
  3. *Blackburn Standard*, August 13, 1862.
  4. *Ibid.*
  5. *Ibid.*
  6. *Ibid.*
  7. *Ibid.* The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, introduced in Congress by James M. Mason, was part of the Compromise of that year, as a result of which California was accepted as a free state, new states were permitted to enter the Union from territory gained from the Mexican War with or without slavery; slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia; and it was made much easier for slaveowners to recapture their fugitive slaves. The Fugitive Slave Act aroused great opposition in the North.
  8. *Ibid.*
  9. *Ibid.*, August 14-15, 1862.
  10. *Bee-Hive*, October 14, 1862.
  11. Henry W. Lord to Charles Francis Adams, United States Consulate, Manchester, January 1, 1863, Charles Francis Adams Papers, "Letters Received," Massachusetts Historical Society.
- It seems incredible that Ellison did not take the trouble to consult either the Charles Francis Adams Papers or the State Department Correspondence files from Great Britain in the National Archives.

12. "Our feelings and our interests," editorialized the *Manchester Guardian* on November 11, 1861, "set us against the Southerners, and yet for the life of us, we cannot look kindly upon their enemies, and, if a battle must be fought, we like them to get the best of it. It is foolish and useless to attempt to disguise this feeling, for it pervades all classes. It is no use theorising about the matter. We ought to support the North, but we cannot and do not." (See also issues of November 15, 17, 1861.)
13. Lord to Adams, January 1, 1863, Adams Papers.
14. *Manchester Guardian*, December 29, 1861. Mary Ellison in *Support for Secession: Lancashire and the Civil War* (Chicago, 1972) p. 31 cites the *Manchester Guardian*, but only the issue of January 2, 1863. She also omits the *Manchester Examiner and Times* altogether, and quotes only the *Manchester Courier*.
15. *Manchester Guardian*, January 1, 1863; *London Morning Star*, January 2, 1863.
16. *Manchester Guardian*, January 1, 1863.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. Frederick Douglass, who had been highly critical of Lincoln early in the war, predicted that he would not back down in the face of pressure from conservative elements in the North, but he still urged popular support to make sure that the President would stand firm. (Philip S. Foner, *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, vol. III, (New York, 1952) pp. 26-27.)
21. *Manchester Guardian*, January 1, 1863.
22. *Ibid.*, February 10, 1863. It does not appear to have been easy later to find copies of the correspondence between the workers of Manchester and President Lincoln. On September 7, 1900, George A. Schilling, Chicago leader of the American Federation of Labor, wrote to Samuel Gompers, AFL president: "Enclosed find letter of Abraham Lincoln to the working people of Manchester. I am sorry that the resolutions and communications to which this letter was a reply, could not be obtained. Perhaps I can get it later on. I think that you should emphasize the fact that militarism subverts Democracy and elevates the shoulder straps above the civilian. Perhaps you can send someone to the Public Library at Washington and find the resolutions and communications sent by the workmen of Manchester to Lincoln." (American Federation of Labor Correspondence.) Gompers was at this time a vice-president of the American Anti-Imperialist League and evidently wanted to make use of the correspondence in attacking imperialism and militarism.
23. *Union and Emancipation Tracts*, No. 2, *The Working Men of Manchester and President Lincoln*, copy in Library of Congress, Rare Book Room.
24. *London Daily News*, January 2, 1863.
25. *Manchester Examiner and Times*, January 1, 1863.
26. *Manchester Guardian*, January 1, 1863.
27. Henry W. Lord to Charles Francis Adams, January 1, 1863, Adams Papers.
28. *Manchester Guardian*, January 2, 1863.
29. *Oldham Standard*, January 3, 1863.
30. *Ibid.*
31. See for example, *Leeds Mercury*, February 19, 1863.
32. Ellison concedes that such meetings were held, but argues, without furnishing any evidence, that "many were clearly planned" by outside elements. (*Support for Secession*, p. 67.)
33. *Liverpool Daily Post*, January 22, 1863.
34. *London Times*, February 5, September 23, 1863.

## Chapter Five

1. *Manchester Guardian*, January 1, 1863.
2. *The Working Classes and the Cotton Crisis*, Speech by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M. P., Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Chester Music Hall, Dec. 27, 1862, on The Distress in Lancashire (Preston, 1863 (?)) p. 5.
3. *New York Times*, September 12, 1862.
4. Ibid., September 17, 18, 20, October 14, 18, 19, 1862.
5. Ibid., December 4, 1862.
6. Ibid., December 10, 1862. The Appeal was signed by John C. Green, chairman, John Taylor, secretary, and A. A. Low, treasurer. Among the seven members of the Executive Committee was George Griswold.
7. Ibid., January 10, 1863; *Leeds Mercury*, February 10, 1863.
8. *New York Times*, February 2, 1863.
9. Ibid., January 10, 1863.
10. *Bee-Hive*, October 29, 1862; *Leeds Mercury*, January 6, 1863.
11. See *Liverpool Daily Post*, February 17, 1863.
12. Ibid., February 17, 18, 1863.
13. *Leeds Mercury*, February 4, 1863; *Liverpool Daily Post*, February 4, 1863. A meeting was also held in Blackburn on March 18, 1863 to pay tribute to the crew of the *George Griswold*. While conceding that the meeting recommended nonintervention, Ellison brushes it off with the observation that this was "stimulated by Northern gifts." (*Support for Secession*, p. 97.)
14. *Bee-Hive*, February 21, 1863.
15. *Liverpool Evening Post*, February 17, 1863; *Bee-Hive*, February 21, 1863.
16. *Manchester Examiner and Times*, February 25, 1863.
17. Ibid.
18. John Saville, ed., *Ernest Jones: Chartist* (London, 1952) pp. 78-79.
19. *Manchester Examiner and Times*, February 25, 1863.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid. For a somewhat cynical account of the distribution of the relief loaves of bread in Manchester, see William O. Henderson, *The Lancashire Cotton Famine, 1861-1865* (Manchester, 1934) p. 110.
22. *New York Times*, February 16, 1863. The memorial was communicated to the United States Senate by President Lincoln. (Ibid., March 4, 1863.)
23. *Fincher's Trade Review*, July 16, 1864, March 18, May 6, 1865. The Peterloo Massacre occurred on August 16, 1819, when workers met outside Manchester, in St. Peter's Field, to agitate in favor of Parliamentary action and in opposition to the Corn Laws. Mounted troops dispersed them without mercy, leaving dead and wounded.

## Chapter Six

1. *London Morning Star*, January 2, 1863; *Bee-Hive*, January 3, 1863.
2. The Scottish labor movement in the early 1860s was weak. "The Trades Councils in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee were either not functioning at all or were meeting infrequently."

(James D. Young, "The American Civil War and the Growth of Scottish Republicanism," *Labor History*, XXII [Fall, 1972] p. 98.)

3. Minutes of the Edinburgh Trades Council, February 10, 1863, cited in Ibid., p. 99.
4. Ibid.
5. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, February 20, 1863, and reprinted in Young, "The American Civil War," pp. 99-106.
6. Ibid., p. 103.
7. Young, "The American Civil War," p. 99.
8. Royden Harrison, "E. S. Beesly and Karl Marx," *Journal of Social History* IV (1959) pp. 28-29. See also Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, p. 69.
9. Two weeks later, the *British Miner and General Newsman*, published in London, carried a curious leader on the Emancipation Proclamation in the course of which it declared: "We deplore slavery wherever it is to be found—in England, in Ireland, in Spain, in Portugal, in Greece, or in America. . . . We are abolitionists from the bottom of our souls, and we would emancipate every slave upon the face of this beautiful earth; but we repeat, this is not the American question, whatever Mr. Lincoln may now say. Emancipate the slave by all means, but prepare the slave for freedom. . . . Take him and teach him, instruct the uninstructed, moralise the immoral, civilise the barbarian, cultivate the understanding, rouse his energies, elevate his pride. It may be a labour of years, perhaps, but if done slowly it will be done well." (February 28, 1863.) It would appear that the labor paper favored keeping the slaves in a state of limbo while the "civilising" process proceeded.
10. Harrison, "E. S. Beesly and Karl Marx," p. 28; Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, p. 45. The London Trades' Council, formed in 1860, consisted of an executive of fifteen members to be elected at an Annual Delegate Conference of the trades of London. Its object was defined as follows: "That the duties of the Council shall be to watch over the general interests of labour, political and social, both in and out of Parliament; to use their influence in supporting any measure likely to benefit Trade Unions; also to publish (if necessary) an Annual Trades Union Directory." The objects proposed for the new body were thus clearly intended to be political as well as economic, and from the first, the Council was actively engaged in a variety of political activities on behalf of trade unionism. Its first secretary was George Howell, a bricklayer, and in 1862, he was succeeded by George Odger, a shoemaker by trade. Sidney and Beatrice Webb gave the name of the "Junta" to those men of the Council who now began to dominate the trade union movement. Among them were Allan of the Engineers, Applegarth of the Carpenters, Daniel Guile of the Ironfounders, and Edwin Coulson of the Bricklayers. It was through the London Trades' Council that the Junta was able to exercise its leadership, in the course of which they found themselves fought by George Potter of the *Bee-Hive* (see George Tate, *History of the London Trades' Council* [London, 1950]).
11. See Ephraim Douglas Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War*, vol. II (New York, 1924) p. 291; John Spargo, *Karl Marx, His Life and Work* (New York, 1910) p. 19; Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, vol. I (New York, 1947) p. 316; Henry Koht, *The American Spirit in Europe* (New York, 1949) p. 138; Herbert M. Morais, "Marx and Engels on America," *Science & Society* XII (Winter, 1948) p. 122; Richard Greenleaf, "British Labor Against American Slavery," *Science & Society* XVII (Spring, 1953) p. 47.
12. Beesly, Frederick Harrison, and John Bridges, leading English Positivists, met at Waldham College, Oxford, in 1848. They fell under the spell of their tutor, Richard Congreve, who was already deeply influenced by August Comte. Comte had been a pupil of St. Simon, but while St. Simon thought of the working class only as the poorest and most numerous class, Comte saw it as an active force and—subject to important qualifications—even as a revolutionary one. When society reached its "normal state," they believed, the workmen, in conjunction with the philosophers (Positivist priests) were to constitute the Spiritual Power. While temporal power was to be concentrated in the hands of bankers and great captains of industry, who were to administer small territorial units in a planned manner, these capitalists were to be "moralised" by the Spiritual Power so as to insure that they "lived for others."

The English Positivists adapted the theories of Comte to English conditions and needs. For Beesly, Harrison, and Bridges, Positivism seemed to promise security and dignity for the workman and his family. (See Royden J. Harrison, "The Positivists and the English Labour Movement" [Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1955].)

Positivism's influence upon the development of British unionism is discussed by Royden Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, pp. 251-342, and Gregory Weinstein, *The Ardent Eighties and After* (New York, 1947) p. 86.

13. Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams, An Autobiography*, new ed., Henry Cabot Lodge, ed., (Boston, 1935) p. 193; Harrison, "Beesly and Marx," p. 28.

14. J. R. Poole, *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain* (London, 1960) p. 24.

15. E. S. Beesly, "Working Men's Emancipation Meeting," *Bee-Hive*, March 14, 1863.

16. *Rochdale Observer*, January 18, 1862; Stanley Broadbridge, "The Lancashire Cotton Famine," pp. 150, 155.

17. For Marx's opinion of Potter, see pp. 58, 82.

18. Harrison, "Beesly and Marx," p. 48.

19. See Henry Adams, "Report on the Trades Union Meeting," in National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group No. 59, General Records of the Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches, Great Britain, reprinted in Charles L. Glicksburg, "Henry Adams Reports on a Trades Union Meeting," *New England Quarterly* XII (Spring, 1943) pp. 225-230.

20. The reference is to the Manchester School, or Manchester Liberalism, which, while demanding the repeal of the Corn Laws, maintained that they were supporting free enterprise as well as free trade. "Scrooge," who was Frederick Harrison, like most British trade unionists, felt that Manchester Liberalism was basically more interested in free enterprise than anything else.

21. *Bee-Hive*, December 13, 1863.

22. Ibid., March 21, 1863.

23. Adams, "Report on the Trades Union Meeting."

24. "Great Meeting of Trades Unionists: Negro Emancipation," *Bee-Hive*, March 28, 1863.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Greenleaf, "British Labor Against American Slavery," p. 49.

33. *Bee-Hive*, March 28, 1863.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence, 1846-1895*, (New York, 1942) p. 147. Royden Harrison conjectures that since Marx made no mention of Beesly's speech, which "would obviously have appealed to him immensely," he must have left before the speech was delivered. ("Beesly and Marx," p. 30.)

37. Henry Adams, "Report on the Trades' Union Meeting"; Glicksburg, "Henry Adams Reports," p. 228.

38. John Bright to Charles Sumner, April 4, 1863, Charles Sumner Papers, Harvard College Library, Harvard University, also quoted in James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States, 1850-1896*, vol. IV, (New York, 1920) p. 353n.

39. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series, vol. CLXX, (London, 1863) Speech of Lord Palmerston, March 27, 1863, pp. 90-91.

40. *Leeds Mercury*, March 28, 1863.

41. E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, p. 196.

42. *The Index*, April 2, 1863, p. 354, reprinted in Greenleaf, "British Labor Against American Slavery," p. 54.

43. Reprinted in "Publicola on the Trades' Union Meeting," *Bee-Hive*, April 11, 1863.

44. For a defense of the North by "Scourge" even before this, see *Ibid.*, January 24, 1863.

45. *Ibid.*, April 11, December 13, 1863.

46. *Ibid.*, April 11, 1863.

47. It was later alleged that he had refused to speak at the meeting, "though urgently requested to do so by the committee," and had tried to persuade others to follow his example. (*Miner and Workman's Advocate*, May 6, 1865.)

48. The *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, however, published only the second resolution and the entire text of Professor Beesly's speech, stating that it "embodies views less familiar to our readers than those of the other speakers, and highly important at the present time." (April 15, 1863.)

49. *Bee-Hive*, October 31, 1863. The original dated June 20, 1863, addressed to John Bright, is in the Charles Francis Adams Letter-Book, Massachusetts Historical Society.

50. *Bee-Hive*, May 2, 9, 1863.

51. *Fincher's Trades' Review*, June 13, 1863.

52. Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years*, II (New York, 1939) p. 23.

53. London *Morning Star*, reprinted in *Liberator*, May 1, 1863.

## Chapter Seven

1. Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," pp. 88-91.

2. *Bee-Hive*, May 16, June 13, July 11, 1863.

3. Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," p. 91.

4. George Troup, "The Price of Labour in the Colonies and the States," *Bee-Hive*, February 20, 1864.

5. *Bee-Hive*, February 27, 1864. Their frightening prospects for emigrants did not intimidate George Howell and W. R. Cremer, among others. On February 15, 1864, Howell wrote to U.S. Minister Charles Francis Adams:

"Sir, I have taken great interest in American questions for some years, I was one of the first to get up the great Demonstration of London Trades in St. James' Hall under the presidency of Mr. J. Bright M.P. and the proposer of the first resolution at that meeting. I am now desirous of proving my confidence in the Federal government by going to America to take the place of her patriotic citizens who have gone forth to fight their country's battles. My means are extremely limited, if therefore, there were any means of getting there cheaply I would be glad to avail myself of them. The position I have long held among the Trades of London will enable me to lay before them the facilities offered by your government and will no doubt conduce to its success." Howell described himself as "a building operative, my age is 30, I have a wife and one child (a boy) 4 years of age." He concluded: ". . . Sir, I cannot but express the admiration I feel for the present Federal government, and earnestly hope that the civil strife which now rages in that country will soon subside, and harmony and concord take its place. The whole of the vast continent will then offer advantages of the struggling workmen of the world, that a stream of emigration will pour in to replace her gallant sons, slain in the mighty struggle."

To this Charles Francis Adams replied that "the government of the United States takes no part in any action to facilitate emigration from this kingdom to the United States. Some private efforts have been made in America to facilitate emigration. I inclose a copy of a circular to show how far they have succeeded." (George Howell to Charles Francis Adams, February 15, 1864; Charles Francis Adams to George Howell, February 20, 1864, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.)

On March 22, 1864, W. R. Cremer implied that the article by Troup had stirred up "a spirit of enquiry" about emigrating to the United States, "but that is not enough." He suggested that a central office or department be opened in London, "its situation and object fully advertised and that at such office every information should be afforded to enquirers," and that the office be used to register applicants for "cheap passage" to the United States. He predicted that if this type of office were established, "the result could be such a *stream* of Emigrants as could astonish the most sanguine." Like Howell, he described himself as a partisan of the Union, and that he had been applied to by workingmen because he was known to have "so warmly espoused the Federal Cause and it being known that I have had some correspondence with your Excellency arising out of our demonstration at St. James' Hall twelve months since and being so well known to the working men in London and the country and more especially to the organised bodies of working men it has been suggested to me to get all the information I could and in fact to act as an agent. . . . The men whom I should chiefly be able to reach are men skilled in various handicrafts and who are acknowledged on all hands to be the cream of the working class and as such would add stability and permanence to your Free and noble Institutions."

This time Adams was more encouraging: "Your views of the expediency of fixing on some position as a source from which correct information may be cheaply furnished to those desiring to emigrate appears to me very just." However, he was not convinced that any effort on the part of the United States government to further the plan "would not be construed as an indirect effort to enlist men for the war. After the war, no such objection can be raised. I think it not unlikely that at that time something will be practicable." (W. R. Cremer to Charles Francis Adams, March 22, 1864; Charles Francis Adams to W. R. Cremer, March 28, 1864, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.)

Howell's remarks about his attitude during the war in America are similar to the statement in his unpublished autobiography: "My love of liberty for all nationalities is equally attested by the part I took in the great American struggle." (George Howell Autobiographies, in the George Howell Collection, Bishopsgate Institute, London, microfilm copy in McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada.)

6. E. S. Beesly, "The Working Man in America," *Bee-Hive*, February 27, 1864.
7. Edmund Beales, "Mr. Troup and the Federal States," *Ibid.*, February 27, 1864.
8. T. J. Dunning, "North v. South," *Ibid.*, February 27, 1864.
9. George Troup, "The Editor, Professor Beesly, and Mr. Beales," *Ibid.*, March 12, 1864.
10. E. S. Beesly, "The Colonies and the States," *Ibid.*, March 12, 1864.
11. *Ibid.*, March 12, 1864.
12. Troup continued to write for the *Bee-Hive* at intervals, but he never again put forward his unpopular views on the war in the United States. (Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," p. 91.)
13. *Bee-Hive*, October 24, 1863.
14. *Manchester Guardian*, January 30, 1864.
15. *Leeds Mercury*, May 27, 30, June 26, 1863; *Oldham Standard*, May 9, 1863; *Bolton Chronicle*, June 19, 20, 1863; *Blackburn Standard*, August 5, 1863; *Manchester Guardian*, January 30, 1864.
16. See *Blackburn Standard*, August 5, 1863.
17. See for example, *Bury Guardian*, December 5, 1863; *Rochdale Observer*, March 12, 13, 1864.

18. Ernest Jones's speech presented here is a composite of the following: Ernest Jones, *The Slaveholder's War: A Lecture Delivered in the Town Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne, by Ernest Jones, Esq., Barrister-At-Law on Monday, November 16th, 1863*, Hugh Mason, Esq. in the chair. Published by the Ashton-under-Lyne Union and Emancipation Society, Manchester, n.d.; *Oration by Ernest Jones, Esq., Barrister-At-Law on the American Rebellion, Delivered at Public Hall, Rochdale, Monday, March 7th, 1864, the Mayor of Rochdale in the Chair*. Reprinted, with Additions, from the *Rochdale Observer*. Published by the Rochdale Branch of the Union and Emancipation Society, Rochdale, n.d.; *Rochdale Observer*, March 12, 13, 1864.

A copy of the "Stop the War" leaflet issued by the Southern Independence Association is in the Manchester Historical Society.

19. Saville, *Ernest Jones: Chartist*, pp. 13–20. Unfortunately, there is still no adequate biography of Ernest Jones. For an analysis of Ernest Jones's career and poetry which is more critical, unduly so in my judgment, than is presented above, see P. M. Ashraf, *Introduction to Working Class Literature in Great Britain*, Part I Poetry (Berlin, German Democratic Republic, 1978), pp. 108–62. Ms. Ashraf does not, however, discuss Jones's role during the American Civil War.

20. *The Slaveholder's War*, p. 4.

21. *Rochdale Observer*, March 12, 13, 1864.

22. Ellison's sole reference to these meetings is the comment that "Ernest Jones glorified the Northern fight for freedom at Ashton." (*Support for Secession*, p. 69.)

## Chapter Eight

1. Henry Collins, "The International and the British Labour Movement," *Society for the Study of Labour History Bulletin* No. 9, Autumn, 1864, pp. 1–4.

2. Samuel Bernstein points out that the French workers did not "hold open meetings as their English brethren did to demonstrate their stand on the side of the North," only because the "Empire regarded public meetings as a prelude to insurrection." But the French workers, "forced to be circumspect, even devious in their expressions of sympathy for the North," did make clear that they "preferred starvation rather than be allies of the slave owners." ("French Labor on American Slavery," *Science & Society* XVII [Spring, 1953] pp. 147–148.)

3. For the formation and activities of the New York Working Men's Democratic Republican Association, see Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, vol. I (New York, 1947) pp. 322–328.

4. *Bee-Hive*, July 23, 1864. The communication was in the form of a letter to Richard Cobden who was requested to forward it to the respective trade unions and groups of working-men in the British Isles.

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5. *The Iron Platform*, September, October, 1864.

6. See Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619–1973* (New York, 1964) pp. 6–14.

7. The "Peace Democrats" or "copperheads" were accused of having stirred up the mobs during the bloody draft riots in New York City in the summer of 1863, and Irish elements, including longshoremen determined to eliminate black competition, participated in criminal, deadly assaults on Negroes. (See Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis, eds., *The Black Worker: A Documentary History*, vol. I. *The Black Worker to 1869* [Philadelphia, 1978] pp. 286–300.) A year before, Cincinnati was the scene of riots against blacks in which the Irish were also said to have been stimulated by "copperhead" propaganda charging that blacks were displacing white workers. (See Leonard Harding, "The Cincinnati Riots of 1862," *Bulletin of the Cincinnati Historical Society* XXV [October, 1967] pp. 229–239.)

8. *The Iron Platform*, November, 1864; *Liberator*, November 4, 1864. The meeting at which the Address was adopted was held in Mechanics' Institute, Dublin, October 3, 1864. However, *Sauder's News Letter* and the *Daily Advertiser*, both published in Dublin, carried no news of such a meeting, and Joseph M. Hernon, Jr. quotes the *Morning News* as indicating that there was not enough support for the Address to enable such a meeting to be held. (Joseph M. Hernon, Jr., *Celts, Catholics & Copperheads: Ireland Views the American Civil War* [Columbus, Ohio, 1968] p. 103.) Hernon, however, makes no mention of the sending of the Address to the New York Workingmen's Democratic Republican Association.

9. Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labor Movement* (London, 1965) pp. 10, 14-15.

10. Garrison, *Before the Socialists*, p. 69; *Bookbinders' Trade Circular*, March 2, 1864. A deputation of French workers visited England to participate in the great pro-Polish gathering in St. James' Hall in July, 1863. After the Frenchmen had gone home, a committee of English trade unionists was formed for the purpose of drawing up a fraternal address. (L. E. Mins, ed., *The Founding of the First International* [New York, 1937] pp. 1-17.)

11. Ibid., pp. 18-21.

12. Marx to Engels, November 4, 1864, *Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels: Werke* Bd. 31 (Berlin, 1974) p. 13.

13. *Documents of the First International: The General Council of the First International, 1864-1866: Minutes* (Moscow, n.d.) p. 287.

Whether or not Marx called the First International into being is also the subject of some controversy. Royden Harrison challenges the claim of Engels, Lenin, and others, for Marx as the "founder" of the International, and gives credit instead to E. S. Beesly. "He, Marx," he writes, "was largely responsible for shaping its character, but he did not call it into being." ("E. S. Beesly and Karl Marx," *Journal of Social History*, IV [1959] p. 31.)

14. "From the beginning," writes Stephen Coltham, "the *Bee-Hive* was closely associated with the International. The St. Martin's Hall meeting was publicised in its columns, and fully reported on the front page of the following issue; while the 'Address and Provisional Rules' were published in pamphlet form from the *Bee-Hive* office. Although Potter never became a member of the International. Hartwell joined at the start and was one of the first group of members elected to the General Council." At a meeting of this Council on November 22, it was moved, seconded and adopted that "the *Bee-Hive* be made the special organ of the International." ("George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," p. 104.)

15. Marx to Engels, December 2, 1864, Mins. ed., *The Founding of the First International*, p. 70.

16. The only criticism of Northern policy expressed in the pages of the *Bee-Hive* from the founding of the International to the end of the Civil War was a letter from Thomas Vize criticizing the "relentless barbarity" reflected in the burning of Atlanta by General Sherman. (December 24, 1864.) It was answered by "L.L." in the January 7, 1865 issue.

17. Ibid., September 17, November 5, 1864.

18. W. H. Cremer to His Excellency, the United States Minister, Charles Francis Adams, September 12, 1864, January 16, 1865, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

19. Quoted in Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years*, III (New York, 1939) p. 259.

20. Benjamin Moran to Charles Francis Adams, December 13, 1864, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

21. Enclosed in Letter from U.S. Minister in London to U.S. Secretary of State, National Archives, Record Group No. 59, General Records of the Department of State, Diplomatic Dispatches, Great Britain, vol. ii, November 25, 1864-March 23, 1865. See also *New York Times*, December 25, 1864. A handwritten copy of the letter to Lincoln is in the Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. It is signed on behalf of the workingmen by Newman Hall, chairman.

22. W. H. Cremer to Charles Francis Adams, December 6, 1864, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

23. Forty-nine members of the Council signed the Address including the following: George Odgen, President of Council; P. V. Lubez, Corresponding Secretary for France; Karl Marx, Corresponding Secretary for Germany; G. P. Fontana, Corresponding Secretary for Italy; J. E. Holtorp, Corresponding Secretary for Poland; H. F. Jung, Corresponding Secretary for Switzerland; and William R. Cremer, Hon. General Secretary. (*Bee-Hive*, January 7, 1865.)

24. Charles Francis Adams Diary, Charles Francis Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

25. *Bee-Hive*, January 7, 1865; *Documents of the First International... 1864-1866: Minutes*, pp. 48-54. Lincoln was not a "son of the working class," although he had been a rail-splitter. Three years later, in the first volume of *Das Kapital*, Marx enunciated the principle that the self-interest of the American working class as a whole had necessitated the abolition of slavery: "In the United States of America, every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed as long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." (Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I [New York, 1939] p. 329.)

26. Charles Francis Adams to W. R. Cremer, Hon. Secy., Int'l Working Men's Assn., Legation 28, January 1865, Charles Francis Adams Letter-Books, Massachusetts Historical Society.

27. *Bee-Hive*, April 22, 1865.

28. This discussion of the meeting is based on the *Bee-Hive* of May 6, 1865, which carried the proceedings in six columns, and the *Miner and Workman's Advocate* of the same date, which published a brief account but in some ways added information not available in the *Bee-Hive*. The *Advocate* account was headed "The Assassination of President Lincoln. Monster Meeting of the Workingmen of London."

29. *Bee-Hive*, May 6, 1865; *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, May 6, 1865.

30. Ibid. The handbill was part of the famous series of nine charges which George Odger brought against George Potter. In June, 1865, an independent investigating committee, headed by Edmund Beales, published its verdict on Odger's charges. While most of the charges were dismissed, the one dealing with the pro-Southern policy of the *Bee-Hive* during the earlier period of the Civil War was sustained. However, Potter continued as manager.

(See Coltham, "George Potter and the 'Bee-Hive' Newspaper," pp. 125-136. For the complete report, see *Bee-Hive*, June 24, 1865 and *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, June 24, 1865. For a discussion of the contents of the handbill, see above, pp. 28-29.)

31. Ibid. The reference to Sumner was to Charles Sumner, whose fierce attack on the slavery system in his speech on "The Crime Against Kansas" in 1856 led to his being physically assaulted on the floor of the U.S. Senate by a proslavery member of the House, Representative Preston Brooks of South Carolina, which forced Sumner into a long convalescence. During that time, Massachusetts kept his seat vacant for him.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid. For the influence of the American Revolution on the French Revolution and the influence of the latter on the United States, see Philip S. Foner, *The Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800* (Westport, Conn., 1977).

37. Ibid. Newman Hall had been one of the speakers at the meeting of London workingmen held to congratulate President Lincoln on his reelection.

38. See Charles Francis Adams Papers, May-June, 1865 and Diplomatic Despatches, Record Group No. 59, General Records of the Department of State, vol. 88 for the same period, National Archives.

39. *Manchester Examiner and Times*, January 23, 1866; *Report of Final Meeting of the Union and Emancipation Society*, Manchester, 1866.

40. *Fincher's Trades' Review*, April 29, May 6, 13, 20, 27, 1865; *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, June 12, 19, 26, 1865.

41. *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, June 5, 1865. For evidence that the British workers were also more advanced in their demands for full freedom for blacks than were American workers, with, however, the exception of the *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, see Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* (New York, 1947) vol. I, pp. 286-298 and Philip S. Foner, *Essays in Afro-American History* (Philadelphia, 1978) pp. 122-150.

42. *Fincher's Trades' Review*, May 13, 20, 1865; *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, June 12, 1865; Jasper Ridley, *Lord Palmerston* (New York, 1971) p. 554.

43. *Boston Daily Evening Voice*, June 5, 1865.

44. Collins, "The International and the British Labour Movement," p. 12.

45. Howard Evans, *Sir Randall Cremer, His Life and Work* (reprint of 1909 ed. with a new introduction by Naomi Churgin Miller) (New York and London, 1973) pp. 22-23.

46. G. D. H. Cole, *The British Working-Class Movement, 1789-1947* (London, 1948) pp. 81-82.  
pp. 81-82.

47. The full address is in *Documents of the First International: The General Council. . . 1864-1866: Minutes*, pp. 307-312. See also Herman Schlüter, *Lincoln, Labor and Slavery* (New York, 1913) pp. 198-201.

For the failure of Marxists in the United States to take up the challenge raised by Marx in this communication, see Philip S. Foner, *American Socialism and Black Americans: From the Age of Jackson to World War II* (Westport, Conn., 1977) pp. 34-36.

## Chapter Nine

1. The National Labor Union was founded by seventy-seven delegates representing thirty states and the District of Columbia, in Baltimore, Maryland on August 20, 1866. A major factor leading to the establishment of the NLU was the emergence of the eight-hour day as a leading issue among American workers, just as it was in British labor circles, as well. Various efforts were made to affiliate the National Labor Union with the International Workingmen's Association, but none succeeded. William J. Jessup of New York, one of the vice-presidents of the NLU, favored affiliation and wrote to the IWA's General Council: "I hold it as a matter of great importance that the working men of both the old and the new countries should be in close communication in relation to the labour movement, as I believe it will prove of mutual benefit to all." (*Documents of the First International: The General Council of the First International, 1866-1868*, [Moscow, 1964] p. 154.) The closest the NLU came to affiliation was the sending of Andrew C. Cameron, editor of the *Workingmen's Advocate*, as a delegate to the Basle convention in 1869 of the First International, but no concrete action toward affiliation followed.

2. The reference is to the fact that the dominant elements in the National Labor Union favored the formation of a National Labor Party with its own candidates for president and vice-president of the United States. Such a party was formed in 1872.

3. *Documents of the First International: The General Council of the First International, 1868-1870. Minutes* (Moscow, 1966) pp. 101-103, 319-321. In reply to the address, William H. Sylvis, president of the National Labor Union and the outstanding labor leader in the United States of that era, assured the IWA that the appeal would be heeded. He went on to note: "Our recent war has led to the foundation of the most infamous aristocracy of the earth. This money power saps the very life of the people. We have declared war against it and we are determined to conquer—by means of the ballot, if possible—if not, we shall resort to more serious means. A little bloodletting is necessary in desperate cases." (J. C. Sylvis, *The Life, Speeches, Labors,*

*and Essays of William H. Sylvis* [Philadelphia, 1872] p. 234.) This was one of Sylvis's last public statements since he died suddenly on July 27, 1869. His death was a great loss, both to the American labor movement and the cause of international labor solidarity, for Sylvis favored affiliation with the First International.

4. Evans, *Sir Randall Cremer, His Life and Work*, pp. 26-30. The Address concluded by urging the necessity of a code of International Law and the establishment of an International Tribunal where such laws would be administered and future disputes referred for arbitration.

5. *Workingman's Advocate*, Chicago, January 14, 1871. The Address also dealt with the war against the French Republic by Prussia, condemned it, and hailed American labor for having itself condemned the war at a meeting in Cooper Institute, New York on November 10, 1870. (For an account of that meeting, see *New York World*, November 11, 1870.) For an earlier attempt to stave off war between the United States and Great Britain by the International Workingmen's Association, and Marx's role in this effort, see Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, vol. I, pp. 236-238.

6. *Workingman's Advocate*, Chicago, January 28, 1871.

7. R. M. Paterson, "Newmiln's Weavers and the American Civil War," *Ayreshire Archaeological & Natural History Society, Collections, Second Series*, I, (1947-1949) pp. 22-23.

## Biographical Sketches

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS (1807–1886) served as Minister to Great Britain from 1861 to 1868. The son of John Quincy Adams, America's sixth president, Adams was a member of Congress from 1858 to 1861. He was appointed to his ministerial post by Abraham Lincoln on the advice of Secretary of State Seward. In 1871–1872, he represented the United States in the settlement of the *Alabama* claims.

HENRY BROOKS ADAMS (1838–1918), historian, served as private secretary to his father, Charles Francis Adams, the American Minister to England during the American Civil War. In the 1870s he taught history at Harvard University and was editor of the *North American Review*. Interested throughout his life in historical studies and the philosophy of history, he was the author of several works of American history and is also remembered for his *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1904) and the autobiographical *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907). A noted historian, he wrote an important multi-volume history of the Jeffersonian era.

WILLIAM ALLEN (1815–1874) was born in Carrickfergus, Ulster of Scottish parents. His father managed a cotton-spinning mill. In 1825 he became a piecer in a cotton factory and then later apprentice for a large engineering firm in Glasgow. In 1835 he went to work as a journeyman engineer in Liverpool and then joined the union at the railway works at Crewe. He became the union's general secretary and when the society merged in 1851 with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, he continued in that position. For over twenty years Allen was annually elected secretary of this vast trade union.

ROBERT APPLEGARTH (1833–1925), the son of a quartermaster in the Royal Navy, went to work at the age of eleven as an errand boy, eventually drifting into the shop of a joiner and cabinetmaker where, unapprenticed, he picked up the trade as best he could. In 1855, he emigrated to the United States, but returned to England the following year. Joining the local Carpenters' Union in Sheffield, he quickly became its most prominent member and brought it over in a body when the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners offered the prospect of more effective trade union action.

Elected general secretary in 1862, he remained in office until 1871, when he voluntarily resigned. He was a prominent member of the "Junta."

WILLIAM BATES (1833–1908) worked as a cotton spinner in Pendleton and was active in the cooperative movement. During the American Civil War, he was on the Committee of the Union and Emancipation Society along with Ernest Jones and E. O. Greening.

THOMAS BAZLEY (1798–1885), a prosperous cotton spinner and merchant in Manchester, represented that city in Parliament from 1858 until his retirement in 1880. He was instrumental in founding the Cotton Supply Association in 1857 and the Manchester Cotton Company in 1861.

EDMUND BEALES (1803–1881), English politician and lawyer, was a member of the Emancipation Society during the American Civil War.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), American clergyman, pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn, New York, was an influential abolitionist and a supporter of woman suffrage and the teaching of evolution. In 1863, he visited England to arouse support for the cause of the North and spoke widely there. After the Civil War he turned against workingmen and denounced labor activities and aspirations.

EDWARD SPENCER BEESLY (1831–1915), historian and Positivist, was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, the center of the English Positivist movement. He became a professor of history at University College, London (1859), and of Latin at Bedford College, London (1860). He nearly lost his professorship at University College, Oxford, for defending trade unions. In 1893, he was made editor of the newly established *Positivist Review*. He frequently wrote for the *Bee-Hive* and was the author of numerous review articles on social and political topics, as well as several historical works.

ALEXANDER BERESFORD-HOPE (1820–1887) was elected several times to Parliament and was particularly interested in legislation relating to religious matters. He wrote and lectured on religion, art, and politics and was the author of several works on the American Civil War. In 1855 he founded *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art*.

JOHN BRIGHT (1811–1889), British statesman and orator, rose to fame on the strength of his influential public speeches against the Corn Laws. He entered Parliament in 1843, and by advocating *laissez-faire*, he became a spokesman for the newly enfranchised industrial middle classes. A Quaker, he was a pacifist and opposed imperial expansion. He favored further extension of the franchise and Irish land reform, but he antagonized the working class by his opposition to the factory acts and strikes. During the Civil War, he was one of England's staunchest supporters of the North.

JAMES BUCHANAN (1791–1868), fifteenth president of the United States (1857–1861), was the leader of the Pennsylvania Democrats and showed his proslavery inclinations by being one of the authors of the "Ostend Manifesto" (1854). At one time, he was U.S. Minister to Great Britain.

CHARLES BUXTON (1802–1871), son of the philanthropist and antislavery leader Sir Thomas Powell Buxton (1786–1845), wrote a popular biography of his father and was a member of Parliament from 1857 to 1871. His *Slavery and Freedom in the British West Indies* (1860) claimed that England had raised the level of civilization in West Africa and the Caribbean islands. Buxton expressed sympathy for the Confederacy and asserted that the antislavery forces in England were making a mistake in siding with the North.

RICHARD COBDEN (1804–1865), English free-trader and merchant, was a leading "Manchester liberal." He was a major proponent of the Anti-Corn Law League (1839–1846) and fought to repeal the tariff on wheat. As a member of Parliament, he sought to encourage commercial treaties with foreign nations and he opposed militarism and war. The commercial treaty he negotiated between England and France (1859–1860) is a landmark in the history of commercial relations among nations. His support for the North during the Civil War made him a well-known and highly respected figure in the United States.

SIR RANDALL CREMER (1838–1908) was born into a poor working-class family in Fareham, Wiltshire. With little education, he found the opportunity to display his capacity for leadership in the trade union movement. While he was still a journeyman carpenter and the nine-hour movement was the dominant concern of the building trades, he was elected as the delegate to the central council directing the movement. He himself was one of the chief organizers of the important Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, and by the 1860s, he was a leading figure in the British trade union movement.

A supporter of the North during the American Civil War, Cremer helped organize the impressive working-class demonstration in St. James' Hall, presided over by John Bright. When a workmen's committee for the support of the North was organized, Cremer became its secretary. He was also active in the Reform League for Universal Suffrage, and he helped found the International Workingmen's Association and became its secretary. He later left the Association and helped found the Workmen's Peace Association. He was knighted in 1907.

OLIVER CROMWELL (1599–1658) was the leader of the Puritan generals who defeated the forces of Charles I at the Battle of Naseby on June 14, 1645, and went on to carry through the Puritan Revolution. In 1655 Cromwell became Lord Protector and instituted a reign of Puritan austerity.

JEFFERSON DAVIS (1808–1889), president of the Confederate States of America, had been a U.S. Senator from Mississippi and Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce. After the South seceded, Davis was elected president of the Confederacy for a six-year term and was inaugurated at Richmond, Virginia in February, 1861. He fled from the Confederate capital at the end of the war and conducted his last Cabinet meeting in Charlotte,

North Carolina, on April 24, 1865. He was captured and imprisoned in Fort Monroe from 1865 to 1867, from which he was then released and his trial for treason dropped. He is the author of *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (1881).

CHARLES WHEELER DENNISON (1809–1881), clergyman, author, and, as a young man, editor of *The Emancipator*, an antislavery journal in New York, served as a chaplain in the Union Army during the Civil War, and was the chaplain of the ship *George Griswold* that brought a relief cargo to the suffering operatives of Lancashire. He was also the author of a number of books, including a series of biographies of famous men for juvenile readers.

STEPHEN ARNOLD DOUGLAS (1813–1861), senator from Illinois, was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854, which intensified sectional strife over slavery. He opposed Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 and unsuccessfully sought the presidency in 1852, 1856, and 1860. In the last of these elections, he was actually nominated.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS (1817–1895), the foremost Negro leader in nineteenth-century America, was born of a slave mother and a white father in Tuckahoe, Maryland. He taught himself to read and write and on September 3, 1838, armed with a seaman's paper supplied to him by a free Negro, he escaped from slavery. In 1841 he delivered his first speech at a convention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society and rapidly became the most famous of the black abolitionists, as well as one of the greatest orators of his day. After publishing his autobiography in 1845, he left for England and for two years he spoke against slavery in Ireland, Scotland, and England. In 1847, his legal freedom was purchased by his British friends and he returned to the United States to take up the struggle against slavery and prejudice. He moved to Rochester, New York, where he published his paper *The North Star*, later *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. He soon became famous as an antislavery editor as well as an orator. A champion of woman's rights, he worked closely with the woman's movement and during the Civil War, he won Abraham Lincoln's praise for his contribution to the Union cause. He continued to battle for full freedom and equality for his people after the Civil War until his death.

T. J. DUNNING (1799–1873) became secretary of the Consolidated Society of Bookbinders in London in 1843 and started the *Bookbinders' Trade Circular* in 1850. During the rest of his life, he wrote most of the *Circular*. In 1858, he joined the celebrated Committee of Inquiry into Trade Societies which was appointed by the Social Science Association and to which he contributed a history of his own society and frequently took part in its annual congresses. His chief literary production is *Trades Unions and Strikes: Their Philosophy* (London, 1860), which he wrote for the prize instituted by his own union for the best defense of workmen's organization. This essay, which no publisher would accept, and which was presented by the society, remains, as the Webbs put it, "perhaps the best presentation of the Trade

Union case which any working man has produced." The Webbs also called Dunning "one of the ablest Trade Unionists of his time." But his influence was reduced in the 1860s because of his stand in opposition to the North during the American Civil War.

FRIEDRICH ENGELS (1820–1895), friend and collaborator of Karl Marx, and with him prepared *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). Active participant in the campaign for the German Imperial Constitution 1849 of which he wrote a brilliant account. From 1850 to 1870 Engels worked in the cotton-manufacturing firm of Eimen & Engels in Manchester in order to support Marx's family and to enable his friend to prepare his major work *Das Kapital*. Member and from 1870 on the General Council of the First International and the Corresponding Secretary for Spain and Italy. Wrote many works of socialist theory and developed, together with Marx, the principles of scientific socialism.

JONATHAN C. FINCHER (1858–1876) was born in Philadelphia where he worked as a machinist and was one of the founders of the first International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths in 1858. He served as the union's national secretary-treasurer for several years. In 1863, he founded *Fincher's Trades' Review* and issued it weekly for the next three years. The *Review* was the most influential trade union publication in the United States of that era and by 1865 it had achieved a circulation of 11,000 in thirty-one of the thirty-six states and five English cities. Fincher helped found the Philadelphia Trades' Assembly in 1863 and was elected to its board of trustees. A staunch champion of trade unionism, Fincher opposed independent political action by labor and left the National Labor Union when it endorsed such independent action.

JOHN C. FRÉMONT (1813–1890), explorer of the Far West and Republican candidate for president in the election of 1856, served as a general in the Union army during the Civil War, resigning in 1862.

GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI (1807–1882), republican leader of the national liberation movement in Italy, had to flee his country in 1834 because of his complicity in antimonarchist plotting. He returned in 1848 and was prominent in the revolutionary activities of that year. After their failure, he left once again, this time coming to the United States, but he returned to Italy in 1854, and in 1859 he was a leader in the war against Austria. In 1860 he led his victorious expedition to Sicily and Naples, and with his thousand "red shirts" overthrew the Bourbon monarchy and made possible the accession of these states to a United Italy. The movement culminated in the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy under the Piedmontese dynasty. His visit to England during the 1860s produced one of the most tremendous outpourings of adulation, especially in working-class circles, in British history. In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, Garibaldi recruited volunteers, and, as commander of the Army of the Vosges, fought on the side of the French Republic. This was his last campaign.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON (1803–1879) was one of the first abolitionists to advocate “immediatism” as opposed to “gradualism.” He published the *Liberator* to advance this cause from January 1, 1831, to the end of 1865. In 1832, with his followers, he founded the first society for immediate emancipation in the United States—the New England Anti-Slavery Society—and a year later, the American Anti-Slavery Society. Garrison visited England and had a considerable influence among the antislavery forces in that country.

WILLIAM EWART GLASTONE (1809–1898), British statesman, began his Parliamentary career as a Tory in 1833, but joined the Liberals at the end of the 1850s and was the dominant figure in the Liberal Party from 1868 to 1894. Gladstone served as Prime Minister four times: from 1868 to 1874, from 1880 to 1885, in 1886, and from 1892 to 1894. He achieved important democratic reforms and favored both extension of the franchise to workingmen and an antiimperialistic foreign policy.

EDWARD OWEN GREENING (1836–1923), co-operator and social reformer, played an important role in the work of the Anti-Slavery Society in Manchester, an organization that raised money to maintain the “Underground Railway” in the United States through which slaves could escape to the free states. He was one of the founding members of the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester and, together with Ernest Jones, he vigorously opposed those in Britain who wished to recognize the South.

SIR WILLIAM HENRY GREGORY (1817–1892) was a member of Parliament for Dublin from 1842 to 1847 and for Galway from 1857 to 1872. During the American Civil War, he favored British recognition of the Confederacy. He was Governor of Ceylon from 1872 to 1877.

DANIEL GUILE (1814–1883), born in Liverpool, the son of a shoemaker, and apprenticed to an ironfounder in 1827, joined the union in 1834. In 1863, he became its corresponding secretary, a position he held until his retirement at the end of 1881.

THE REVEREND CHRISTOPHER NEWMAN HALL OF LONDON (1816–1902) was one of the most popular preachers of the 1860s and enjoyed a wide following among workingmen. A supporter of the North during the American Civil War, he presided at several workingmen’s meetings in favor of the Union and sought to strengthen the commitment of the North to the abolition of slavery.

GEORGE JULIAN HARNEY (1817–1897), political organizer and early Socialist, and a strong advocate of Chartism, was editor of the *Northern Star* from 1845–1850 and established contact with Marx and Engels. Left for the United States in 1863, and returned to England in 1888.

FREDERICK HARRISON (1831–1923), British author, publicized the Positivist views of French sociologist August Comte in Great Britain and was a member of the Royal Commission on Trade Unions.

GEORGE HOWELL (1833–1910), mason and former Chartist, became secretary of the London Trades’ Council (1861–1862) and firmly supported the North during the Civil War. Howell participated in the Inaugural Meeting of the International Workingmen’s Association held in St. Martin’s Hall on September 28, 1864, and was a member of the General Council of the International (1864–1869) and a participant in its London Conference in 1865. He was secretary of the Reform League and, from 1871–1875, of the Parliamentary Committee of the British Trades Union Congress.

ANDREW JOHNSON (1808–1875), a self-made “poor white” tailor from Tennessee, rose to become its political leader, stayed with the Union during the secession crisis, and became vice-president under Lincoln in 1864. He succeeded to the presidency after Lincoln was assassinated. Although at first radical in his approach to the slaveowners, he soon allied himself with them against the Radical Republicans and fought their efforts to achieve full freedom for the ex-slaves. He was tried for impeachment but was acquitted by one vote.

JOHN KANE (1819–1876), born in Alnwick, Northumberland, went to work at the age of seven, serving in various capacities until the age of fifteen, when he moved to Newcastle-on-Tyne and entered the Hawkes ironworks in Gateshead. There, he took part in the Chartist and other progressive movements, making a vain attempt in 1842 to form a union in his trade. Not until 1863 were his efforts successful, and when in 1868, the Amalgamated Ironworkers’ Association was formed on a national basis, Kane became its general secretary, a position he held until his death.

WILFRID LAWSON (1829–1906), member of Parliament for Carlisle, became interested in the temperance movement and supported this cause in Parliament after he was elected for the first time in 1859. He favored the abolition of the House of Lords and of standing armies.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865), sixteenth president of the United States, was born in Kentucky and settled in Illinois, where he became an attorney and entered state politics. He established himself as a national figure during the 1858 senatorial campaign in Illinois when he debated Stephen A. Douglas on the Dred Scott decision and the slavery question. In 1860 Lincoln won the presidential election as the Republican candidate on a platform opposing both the further extension of slavery in the territories and its abolition in the South. Guiding the nation through the trials of civil war, he abandoned his earlier opposition to making slavery the key to Union victory, and by the fall of 1862, he had issued the preliminary proclamation of emancipation which was followed on January 1, 1863, by the final Emancipation Proclamation. He was reelected president in 1864, defeating Democrat George B. McClellan. Shortly after the surrender of Confederate General-in-Chief Robert E. Lee on April 9, 1865, Lincoln was shot to death by John Wilkes Booth in Ford’s Theatre, Washington, D.C. on April 14 and died the next day.

**OWEN LOVEJOY** (1811–1864), American abolitionist and statesman, was the brother of murdered abolitionist Elijah P. Lovejoy. He began his career as a minister in Illinois. After winning a seat in Congress in 1856, he became the recognized leader of the Illinois abolitionists and influenced that state to support Lincoln in the presidential election of 1860. He proposed the bill that abolished slavery in United States territories.

**KARL MARX** (1818–1883), founder of “scientific socialism” and one of the most influential thinkers of all time, was born in Germany. He studied history and political economy, was converted to socialism, and, rejecting the theories of utopianism, developed, together with Friedrich Engels, the principles of scientific socialism, or Marxism. They co-authored *The Communist Manifesto* at the invitation of the Congress of the Communist League in London in 1847, and it was published in 1848. Marx’s major work was *Das Kapital*, but he authored (sometimes with Engels) many important works of socialist theory. Marx spent most of his life in England, where he did intensive research in the British Museum, played an active role in the International Workingmen’s Association, which he helped found, and through his correspondence, kept contact with socialists all over the world.

**HUGH MASON** (1817–1886), son of a spinner in a cotton mill, went to work in his father’s mill before ten and worked thirteen hours daily. At fourteen, having obtained a rudimentary education at night school, he went to work in a banking house, and at twenty-one, took over operation of a textile factory. He set up a model colony in Ashton-under-Lyne, and also pioneered in allowing workers Saturday afternoon off. Elected Mayor of Ashton-under-Lyne from 1856 to 1859; president of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce from 1871 to 1873; Member of Parliament from 1880 to 1882, and, in January, 1881, accepted chairmanship of the National Society for Women’s Suffrage.

**JAMES MURRAY MASON** (1798–1871), U.S. senator from Virginia, drafted the infamous Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and was a Confederate diplomatic commissioner to Europe. He was involved with John Slidell in the *Trent* affair.

**JAMES WILLIAM MASSIE** (1799–1869), an Independent minister, was born in Ireland and began his career in the ministry as a missionary in India. He was an abolitionist and a member of the deputation that visited the United States to convey an address adopted at the ministerial conference held in the Free-Trade Hall in Manchester on June 3, 1863. In 1862, he published *The American Crisis in Relation to the Anti-Slavery Cause*.

**THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER** (1823–1867) escaped to the United States from his native Ireland in 1852 and became a U.S. citizen and lawyer. During the American Civil War, he organized and commanded a regiment of New York volunteers, which fought at Richmond in the second Battle of Bull Run, and at Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Chancellorsville. Appointed secretary of the Montana Territory in 1865, he died mysteriously while on an inspection tour of the Missouri River.

**JOHN STUART MILL** (1806–1873), English economist and philosopher was the author of, among other works, the *Essay on Liberty* (1859). He strongly supported the North during the American Civil War. Among his important contributions was his early advocacy of emancipation of women.

**LORD ROBERT MONTAGU** (1825–1902) was an English economist and a member of Parliament from 1859 to 1880.

**BENJAMIN MORAN** (1820–1886), American diplomat and author, was born in Pennsylvania. He went to England in 1853 and spent most of the remainder of his life there. He secured employment as a clerk at the American legation and rose to become its secretary, a post he held between 1864 and 1874. His massive *Diary* (43 volumes) provides insight into Anglo-American relations during the Civil War.

**CHARLES SLAUGHTER MOREHEAD** (1802–1868) represented Kentucky in the U.S. Congress from 1847 to 1851. He was elected governor of Kentucky in 1855. He favored the extension of slavery and upheld the Fugitive Slave Act.

**BAPTIST WROTHESLEY NOEL** (1798–1873), clergyman, was minister of the John Street (Baptist) Chapel in London during the American Civil War. He supported the North during the war years and published *Freedom and Slavery in the United States of America* (1863) to advance the Union cause.

**GEORGE ODGER** (1820–1877), son of a Cornish miner in Rousborough, near Tavistock, South Devon, became a shoemaker at an early age. Tramping about the country, as was then customary, he eventually settled in London, became a prominent member of the Ladies’ Shoemakers’ Society and rose to prominence in the labor movement. Upon the formation of the London Trades’ Council in 1860, he became one of its leading members and acted as its secretary from 1862 to 1871. As one of the leaders of London working-class radicalism, he attempted five times to get into Parliament, but was unable to win because of the opposition of the official Liberal Party. He was a member of the General Council of the First International from 1864 to 1871.

**LORD PALMERSTON** (1784–1865), Whig statesman, compiled a long career, including more than thirty years as British Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, which made him an important figure in European affairs. He was known for his belligerent attitude in foreign policy.

**WILLIAM Pitt** (1759–1806), second son of the first Earl of Chatham (1708–1778), served as British Prime Minister from 1783 to 1801 and from 1804 to 1806.

**SAMUEL PLIMSELL** (1824–1898), English social reformer, was known as “the sailors’ friend” because of his campaign to eliminate the dangers to seamen in the merchant marine. Author of *Our Seamen* (1873) and *Cattle Ships* (1890), he helped to secure passage of the Merchant Shipping Act (1890).

GEORGE POTTER (1832–1893) trained as a carpenter, gained prominence during the London building trades strike of 1859 and was one of the founders of the *Bee-Hive* and its manager. He was often in disagreement with other trade union leaders, who opposed him for a variety of reasons, among which were his pro-Southern tendencies during the early years of the Civil War in America.

THOMAS BAYLEY POTTER (1817–1898) was president and chief financial supporter of the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester, established in 1863, and a strong advocate of the North during the American Civil War. When Richard Cobden died in 1865, Potter took over his Parliamentary seat as representative from Rochdale and held it for the next thirty years.

EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY (1800–1882) was an English divine and the founder of Puseyism. With John Henry Newman, he wrote *Tracts of the Times* (1833), a widely discussed work. He favored auricular confession and other doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

JOHN RUSSELL, first Earl (1792–1878) served as Prime Minister from 1846 to 1852 and as Foreign Secretary under Lord Palmerston from 1860 to 1865 during the years of the American Civil War. In the latter capacity, he advocated British neutrality toward the United States and the Southern Confederacy. Russell became Prime Minister again upon Lord Palmerston's death in 1865.

CARL SCHURZ (1829–1906), refugee from Germany, became a leader of the German-American community. He served as a general in the Union Army during the Civil War and was an editor of the New York *Evening Post*. As Secretary of the Interior under President Rutherford B. Hayes, he advocated civil service reform.

WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD (1801–1872), American lawyer and statesman, was elected governor of New York and United States senator. In the Senate, he was a leader of the antislavery forces, opposing the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and advancing the concept of a "Higher Law" than the Constitution. In 1858, Seward asserted that there was an "irrepressible conflict" between the North and South, and this radical statement helped lose him the Republican presidential nomination in 1860 to Abraham Lincoln. He became Secretary of State in Lincoln's Cabinet.

JOHN SLIDELL (1793–1871), Louisiana politician and diplomat, was active on a mission to Mexico and advocated acquiring Cuba for the South. He was involved with James M. Mason in the *Trent* affair.

GOLDWIN SMITH (1823–1910) was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford and taught English history in the United States from 1868 to 1878. A prolific writer, his works include *Three English Statesmen* (1867) and *Political History of the United States*. During the Civil War, he wrote on behalf of the Union.

EDWARD GEORGE GEOFFREY SMITH STANLEY, fourteenth Earl of Derby (1799–1869), British statesman, was Canning's Undersecretary for the Colonies in 1827 and Colonial Secretary under Peel from 1841 to 1845. As leader of the Conservatives he headed two brief ministries in 1852 and in 1858–1859. He formed a third ministry (1866–1860), in which Benjamin Disraeli, as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, played a dominant role.

JAMES STANSFIELD (1820–1898), English lawyer and radical, was elected member of Parliament for Halifax in 1859 and thereafter held a number of government posts.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON STEPHENS (1812–1883), member of Congress from Georgia from 1843 to 1859, spoke out in favor of extending slavery in the territories. Stephens helped to organize the Confederate States of America and was elected its vice-president. In March, 1861, he delivered his "cornerstone speech" in Savannah, Georgia, in which he called slavery the basis of the Confederate government. The speech was used extensively in the North and in Europe to rally support for the Union. He was elected governor of Georgia in 1882.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE (1811–1896), American author, was an ardent abolitionist and the sister of abolitionist minister Henry Ward Beecher. She wrote the famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) about the conditions of slaves in the South, which sold over a million copies within a year of publication. The book was exceedingly popular in England and she was received as a celebrity when she visited the British Isles. However, her associations with the upper classes antagonized many workers and labor leaders.

CHARLES SUMNER (1811–1874), Massachusetts abolitionist, was elected to the U.S. Senate, where he played a leading role in the battle against slavery and for civil rights for Negroes. Attacked on the floor of the Senate by a proslavery partisan in 1856 for his speech, "The Crime Against Kansas," he suffered a long convalescence during which the state of Massachusetts kept his seat vacant for him. After the Civil War, he was a leader of the Radical Republicans and favored a policy of Reconstruction which would encompass full freedom—civil, political, and economic—for the ex-slaves.

PETER ALFRED TAYLOR (1819–1891) was a member of Parliament for Leicester and in 1862 was the youngest member of the House of Commons.

HENRY VINCENT (1813–1878), Chartist and radical lecturer, consistently defended the North against the South during the Civil War. He made several lecture tours of the United States between 1866 and 1876.

JOHN WALTER (1818–1894), proprietor of the *Times* of London, was the grandson of John Walter (1739–1812), founder of the newspaper. He had a long career in Parliament, first representing Nottingham and then Berkshire. Interested in the technology of printing, he adopted steam machinery in 1869 ("the Walter press") for printing the *Times*.

## Index

- Abraham Lincoln and the Working Class of Britain*, 18–19, 57–58  
*Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, 66  
*Achilles*, 50, 52  
Adams, Charles Francis, accused of perpetuating myth, 23; contributes flag to IWA, 83; forwards Lincoln's reply to Free Trade Hall meeting, 42; and Free Trade Hall meeting, 39–40; instructions to, 1; on emigration of British trade unionists to United States, 110; on International Workingmen's Association, 84; relays Lincoln's reply to IWA address, 85; sends *Bee-Hive* to U.S., 65–66; bio. sketch, 117  
Adams, E. D., 17  
Adams, Henry, accused of perpetuating myth, 23; arrives in England, 1–2; credits Marx with organizing St. James' Hall meeting, 57; praises St. James' Hall meeting, 62; visit to Manchester, 100–101; bio. sketch, 117  
Adams, John Quincy, 117  
Address, of Free Trade Hall meeting for *George Griswold*, 52; of Free Trade Hall meeting to Lincoln, 41–43, 51, 83–84; of London working-class meeting to Lincoln, 55; of St. James' Hall meeting to Lincoln, 60–61; of the "distressed operatives of Blackburn," 53; of workingmen of Ireland, 80; of IWA, 92  
"Address to the Workingmen of America," 94–95  
African slave trade, 32–33, 73, 102  
Aitkin, William, 36  
*Alabama*, 98  
"Alabama Claims," 93–95, 98  
Allen, A. C., 14  
Allen, William, 117  
Amalgamated Ironworkers' Association, 123  
Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, 29–30  
Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, 117–18  
Amalgamated Society of Engineers, 117  
American Anti-Imperialist League, 105  
American Anti-Slavery Society, 122  
American historians, view on British workers and Civil War, 13–14, 99  
"American Labour Question, The," 28  
American Revolution, 13  
"American Sympathy with the Lancashire Operatives," 50  
Anderson, Robert, 86  
Annexation of Texas, 73  
Anti-Corn Law League, 119  
"Appeal for the Suffering Operatives of Great Britain," 49, 50  
"Appeal to Great Britain," 31–33  
Applegarth, Robert, 29–30, 81, 107; bio. sketch, 117  
Appomatox, 85  
"Artizan Advocates of Mediation," 35  
Ashral, P. M., 111  
Ashton-under-Lyne, 36, 77  
Aspinwall, Miles, 35–36  
Atlanta, 112  
Attacks, on traditional thesis of role of British workers, 15–17  
Auken, Sheldon Van, 15  
"Ballot and Universal Suffrage," 91  
Barker, Joseph, 70–72  
Barlow, Joseph, 52  
Bates, William, 118  
Bazley, Thomas, 118  
Battle, of Bull Run, 2, 3–4  
Beales, Edmund, 69, 91, 113; bio. sketch, 118  
Beccher, Henry Ward, 118  
*Bee-Hive*, attacked for pro-Confederacy stand, 28; ceases to support South, 69; condemns North, 67–69; contempt for Emancipation Proclamation, 65; declares British workers support North, 69–70; denounces Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, 29;

*Bee-Hive* (continued)

denounces Lincoln, 29; distributed in U.S., 65–66; early copies missing, 29; finally supports Union, 82–83; founded, 29; and formation of International Workingmen's Association, 112; hails Union victory, 86; lists achievements of Lincoln Administration, 82–83; on London meeting, 55; Marx desires to be IWA organ, 82; official organ of London Trades' Council, 57; prints Marx's address, 94; pro-Confederate position denounced, 30–31; publishes Address to Lincoln, 84–85; supports Confederacy, 16, 28–30; 67–69; supports reelection of Lincoln, 83; urges breaking of blockade, 29; views Emancipation Proclamation with contempt, 56–57

Beesly, Edward Spencer, as a Positivist, 107, 108; attacks *Bee-Hive* for supporting Confederacy, 68–69; attacks George Troup, 68–69; credited with organizing St. James' Hall meeting, 57–57; enraged by *Bee-Hive* support for South, 69; and founding of International Workingmen's Association, 112; speech at St. James' Hall meeting, 58, 61; speech at St. Martin's Hall meeting, 89, 109; supports North, 61, 67; threatens to resign from *Bee-Hive*, 69; bio. sketch, 118

*Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics*, 17

Beresford-Hope, Alexander, 118

Bernstein, Samuel, 111

Blodgett, Richard, 102

Blackburn, address of the "distressed operatives," 53; economic distress in, 35, 37; meeting in, 17, 106; defeat of pro-Confederate forces in, 35–38

*Blackburn Patriot*, 35–36, 71

*Blackburn Standard*, 35–36, 37, 38, 71

Blackburn Weavers' Association, 17, 36

Black Revolution, 57

Blockade, British labor press supports breaking, 26–28, 37–38; effect of in England, 4–5; running, 50

*Bolton Chronicle*, 21–22, 71

Bookbinders' Society, 51, 67

Bookbinders' Trade Circular, 120

Booth, John Wilkes, 85–86

Border States, 33

*Boston Daily Evening Voice*, 90–91

Bostford, Richard, 15

Brady, Eugene A., 4–5

"Break the Blockade," 29

*Bricklayers' Trade Circular*, 25

Bridges, John, 107, 108

Bright, John, accused of perpetuating myth, 19, 22; champion of North, 58; disliked in labor circles, 16; efforts to achieve reconciliation between trade unions and, 158–59; incorrectly credited with originating *George Griswold*, 21; influence limited, 77; Marx praises, 62; praises St. James' Hall meeting, 62; reasons for coolness of trade unions to, 58; role at St. James' Hall meeting, 56, 57–60; thanked for role at St. James' Hall meeting, 62; bio. sketch, 118  
"British Labour and American Slavery," 23  
"British Labour and the Confederacy," 17, 19  
British labor press, pro-Confederate stand of, 25–30; pro-Union stand of, 25–33, 56

*British Miner and General Newsman*, 107

British Trades' Union Congress, 18, 23

British workers, hail Union victory, 86–90; meetings, 20, 51–53; praised, 79–80; role in preventing England from intervening, 90–91; saddened by Lincoln's assassination, 86–88; support for North called myth, 19–20; support Garibaldi, 18; support Poland, 18; why support North, 53–54

Brooks, Michael, 19

Brooks, Preston, 113

Buchanan, James, 11; bio. sketch, 118

Bull Run, Battle of, 2, 3–4

Burnely, 19

Butler, Benjamin F., 27

Butler, Pierce, 8, 98

Buxton, Charles, 119

Buxton, Thomas Powell, 119

Cameron, Andrew C., 114

Cantry, Edward R., 85

Chambers of Commerce, 49–50

Chartism, 9, 71–72, 122

Chartists, 57, 71–72, 77, 95, 123, 127

Chartist songs, 71

Civil War, British labor press on, 25–33; causes of, 72–73; "cotton famine," 4–5; ends, 85; evaluation of significance of by Marx, 84–85; impact of on British labor movement, 56; impact on working-class internationalism, 79–81; relation of to suffrage in England, 91–92; results of for labor, 93–94; slavery abolished as result, 90; *Trent Affair* during, 6–9, 98, 124, 126; view it will be short war, 2–3

Clitheroe, 6

Cobden, Richard, accused of perpetuating

myth, 19, 22; antagonized by Morrill tariff, 3; dies, 126; joins with Ernest Jones, 91; persuasive oratory, 20; bio. sketch, 119

Cobden-Chevalier Treaty, 3

Coltham, Stephen, 112

Committee of Inquiry into Trade Societies, 120

*Communist Manifesto, The*, 121, 124

Comte, August, 107, 122

Confederate Army, 20, 100–101

Confiscation Act, 3

Congreve, Richard, 107

Congress of the Communist League, 124

"Contraband," 3

Copperheads, 79, 80, 111

Corn Laws, 106, 108, 118

Cosmopolitan, C. C., 25, 102

"Cotton famine," 4–5

Cotton Supply Association, 118

Cotton trade, of South with England, 4–5

Coulson, Edwin, 107

Coulter, E. Merten, 4

Cremer, W. R., 60, 83, 85, 91, 110; bio. sketch, 119

Cromwell, Oliver, 119

"Crime Against Kansas, The," 113, 127

Cunliffe, Marcus, 100

*Das Kapital*, 113, 121, 124

Davis, Jefferson, 2, 22, 42, 48, 56, 85; bio. sketch, 19–20

Delany, Martin R., 102

Dennison, Charles Wheeler, 51, 52–53; bio. sketch, 120

*Dictionary of National Biography*, 70

*Die Presse*, 11–12

District of Columbia, abolition of slavery in, 32–33, 37

Donald, John, 95–96

Douglass, Frederick, 31–33, 103, 105; bio. sketch, 120

Douglas, Stephen Arnold, 123; bio. sketch, 120

Draft riots, 111

Dred Scott decision, 123

Dunning, T. J., 57, 58, 67, 69; bio. sketch, 120–21

Edinburgh, meeting in, 56

Edinburgh Emancipation Society, 55

Edinburgh Trades Council, 55–57

*Education of Henry Adams, The*, 57, 117

Edwards, J. E., 20, 39, 40, 44

Elkins, Stanley, 101

Ellison, Mary, asserts pro-Northern meetings contrived, 20; attacks Free Trade Hall meeting in Manchester, 20–21; criticism of, 24, 104; discussion with, 101; distorts Garrison's position, 23; methods criticized, 20–21; on *George Griswold* meetings, 21, 106; on Henry Adams' visit to Manchester, 100–101; praise for, 24; thesis that Lancashire workers supported South, 19–24

Emancipation Proclamation, British labor press on, 32, 33, 50, 54; effect of, 41–42, 107. See also Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

Emigration, 103

Engels, Friedrich, 12–13, 24, 62, 72; bio. sketch, 121

England, "cotton famine" in, 4–5; dependent on Southern states for cotton, 4–5; effect of blockade on, 4–5; forces in who favor Confederacy, 3; grief in over Lincoln's assassination, 28; growth of working-class internationalism in, 79–81; labor press in, 12–13; meetings in, 11–12, 35–39, 51–65, 70–71; newspapers which favored North, 4; press favoring Confederacy, 3–4; role of upper classes, 14–15; Proclamation of Neutrality, 2; reasons for not intervening on side of South, 8–9; traditional view on role during Civil War, 13–14; unemployment during Civil War, 4–5; war fever in, 7–9; war with U.S. threatened, 93–95  
"England Must Break the Blockade or Her Millions Will Starve," 26–27

*English Defence of the Commune, The*, 18

English Positivists, 107–108

Evans, Thomas, 40, 52

Fielden, J. C., 38

Fincher, Jonathan C., 53–54; bio. sketch, 121

*Fincher's Trades' Review*, 53–56, 66, 121  
First International. See International Workingmen's Association.

Fort Sumter, 1, 67, 86

France, impact of Civil War on, 3, 79, 111; workers in support North, 79, 111  
Franco-Austrian War, 78

Franco-Prussian War, 12, 115

Fraternal Democrats, 72

Free Trade Hall meeting (Manchester), 20–21, 30–45, 51–53, 105  
Fremont, John C., 3, 27, 36; bio. sketch, 121

French Revolution, 113

French West Indies, 57

"Friends of Freedom," 90  
 Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, 29, 38, 56, 124  
 Fugitive Slaves, 3, 33

Garnet, Henry Highland, 102  
 Garibaldi, Giuseppe, 18, 31, 72; bio. sketch, 121  
 Garrison, William Lloyd, 70, 104; bio. sketch, 122  
 General Council, International Workingmen's Association, 14, 23, 91  
*George Griswold*, 21, 47–54, 106  
*Glasgow Sentinel*, 16, 35  
 Gladstone, William Ewart, 19, 22–23, 47, 101; bio. sketch, 122  
 Gompers, Samuel, 105  
*Great Britain, and the American Civil War*, 17  
 Grant, Ulysses S., 85  
 Greening, Edward Owen, 122  
 Gregory, William Henry, 122  
 Grimshaw, Mortimer, 36  
 Griswold, N. C., 49  
 Guile, Daniel, 122  
*Guardian, The*, 24

Haiti, 33, 61  
 Hall, Newman, 89, 112, 113; bio. sketch, 122  
 Harney, George Julian, 20, 31–33; bio. sketch, 122  
 Harrison, Frederick, 107, 108; bio. sketch, 122  
 Harrison, Royden, 5–6, 17–18, 56, 57, 58, 81, 108, 112  
 Hartwell, Robert, 63, 64–65, 68, 88, 99  
 Harvard University, 117  
 Hayes, Rutherford B., 126  
 Hernon, Joseph M. Jr., 14, 15, 112  
 Heyward, Abel, 20  
 "Higher Law," 26  
 "History of a Myth: British Workers and the American Civil War, The," 19–20, 22–24  
*History of England*, 92  
 Hodson, T., 39  
 Hooson, Edward, 20, 40–41, 44  
 Hotze, Henry, 20  
*Hope*, 50  
 Hopwood, John Turner, 35  
 Hoyle, Isaac, 77  
 Howell, George, denounces *Bee-Hive* for pro-Confederation position, 30–31; desires to emigrate to U.S., 109–110; on Nine Hours Movement, 80; secretary London Trades' Council, 107; secretary National Reform

League, 91; speech at St. James' Hall meeting, 60; supports Negro equality, 103; supports North, 30–31, 67, 110; bio. sketch, 123  
 Hungarians, 74  
*Hungry Mills, The*, 24  
 Hutchinson, R. H., 37

*Independent, The*, 104  
*Index, The*, 20, 62–63  
 India, 102  
 Innes, Alexander, 104  
 International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths, 121  
 International Welcome and Protest Committee, 72  
 International Workingmen's Association, Address to American people, 92; Address to Lincoln, 84–85; Address to National Labor Union, 93–94; General Council, 23, 92, 93; hails Lincoln's reelection, 84; Inaugural Address, 82; and National Labor Union, 114; origin, 112; Lincoln's response to, 85; origins, 80–81, 112; role of Marx in, 81–82; significance, 81; supports North, 82–83  
 Ireland, 80, 112  
 "Ireland to Irishmen in America: Address of the Workingmen of the Capital of the Fatherland to their Kindred of their own order in the Loyal States of the Republic," 80  
 Irish, 80, 111  
*Iron Platform, The*, 80  
 Italian liberation, 74, 80, 114

Jackson, James, 37–38  
 Jenkins, Brian, 19  
 Jessup, William J., 114  
 Johnson, Andrew, 88; bio. sketch, 123  
 Johnston, Joseph E., 85  
 Jones, Ernest, analysis of lectures for Union, 72–77; appeals to workers for Union cause, 72–78; challenges Joseph Barker, 71; champion of British workers, 77–78; criticized by Engels, 72; criticizes defense of Confederacy, 73–75; great influence in Lancashire, 77–78; great reputation in British working-class circles, 52; influence in gaining working-class support for Union, 77–78; joins middle-class Radicals, 91; lectures for Union cause, 72–77; and Marx and Engels, 72; speaks for Union cause, 71–78; speech at Free Trade Hall

meeting, 52; supports North, 52, 72–73; bio. sketch, 71–72  
 Jones, Mason, 88  
 Jones, Peter d.A., 19–20, 22, 24, 101  
 Jones, W. D., 14  
*Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation in 1838–39*, 8  
 Junta, 58, 91, 107

Kane, John, 123  
 Kansas-Nebraska bill, 120  
 Kemble, Fanny, 8, 98  
 Kilmarnock, 95–96  
*King Cotton Diplomacy*, 14

Labor press, 12, 15, 90–91, 102  
 Ladies' Shoemaker Society, 125  
 Lancashire, distress in, 29–30, 47; grief in over Lincoln's assassination, 90; lectures by Ernest Jones in, 72–79; relief for workers in, 8–9; voice of, 35–45  
 Lee, Robert E., 85  
 Leeds, 45  
*Leeds Mercury*, 71  
 Liberal Party, 122  
 Liberia, 62  
 Lincoln, Abraham, address to, 84–85; assassinated, 85–86, 123; assassination saddens British workers, 28, 86–87; attacked, 63; countmands Fremont's order, 27–28, 36; declares aim in war is only to preserve Union, 2–3; denounced in *Bee-Hive*, 29; elected President, 1, 18; interview with, 88; message to from General Council, IWA, 23; opposes secession, 1; praised, 32–33, 41, 61, 77, 82–84, 86–90; praises Lancashire workers, 51, 88; presents flag to weavers, 95; reelected, 84, 123; renominated, 83; replies to Manchester Free Trade Hall address, 42–43, 51; replies to St. James' Hall address, 65–66; replies to IWA address, 85; war aims viewed suspiciously, 19–20; will not retreat, 105; bio. sketch, 123  
 Lincoln-Douglas debates, 120, 123  
*Liverpool Daily Post*, 45, 50–51  
*Liverpool Evening Post*, 71  
 London, meetings of workers in, 11–13, 55–65, 86–90; workers in congratulate Lincoln, 84  
 London Chartists, 72  
*London Daily News*, 4, 11, 43  
 London Society of Compositors, 64–65  
*London Times*, 4, 5–6, 11, 13, 62, 127

London Trades' Council, 16, 29–30, 56–65, 69, 72, 91, 100, 107, 123, 125  
 London Working Men's Association, 92  
 "London Working Men's Central Committee, The," 103  
 Longmate, Norman, 24  
 Lord, Henry W., 39, 40, 44  
 Lovejoy, Elijah P., 124  
 Lovejoy, Owen, 124  
 Lunt, W. E., 92

Macfie, E. A., 51  
 McClellan, George B., 123  
 Manchester, Free Trade Hall meeting in, 20–21, 39–45; Henry Adams visits, 101; workers support North, 20–21, 39–45  
*Manchester Examiner and Times*, 21, 44, 101  
*Manchester Guardian*, 39, 44, 71, 105  
 Manchester Liberalism, 108  
 Manchester School, 108  
 Mantz, T. J., defends role at St. James' Hall meeting, 64–65; speech at St. James' Hall meeting, 60  
 Manhood Suffrage and Vote by Ballot Association, 91  
 Marx, Karl, accused of perpetuating myth, 23; contempt for George Potter, 82; credited with organizing St. James' Hall meeting, 57; discusses London workers' meeting, 11–13; and Ernest Jones, 72; evaluation of significance of Civil War by, 84–85; and founding of International Workingmen's Association, 112; hails St. James' Hall meeting, 62; message to Lincoln, 23; praises John Bright, 62; on need to abolish slavery, 113; on results of Civil War for labor, 93–94; on "twofold slavery," 100; role in First International, 81–82; scorn for John Bright's principles, 58; scorn for George Potter, 58; writes Address to American people, 92; writes address to National Labor Union, 113–14; writes Address to President Lincoln, 84–85; bio. sketch, 124  
 Mason, Hugh, 11; bio. sketch, 124  
 Mason, James M., 7, 11, 38, 56, 104, 105, 106; bio. sketch, 124  
 Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, 120  
 Massie, James William, 124  
 Meagher, Thomas Francis, 124  
 Meetings, of British workers, 11–12, 20–21, 28, 30–45, 48, 50–53, 55–67, 86–90  
 Metropolitan Trades' Societies, 29–30

Mexican War, 73  
*Midsummer Night's Dream, A*, 63–64  
 Mill, John Stuart, 124  
*Miner and Workman's Advocate*, 29, 113  
 "Mr. Lincoln and the Slave Proclamation," 57  
 Montagu, Robert, 125  
 Moran, Benjamin, 125  
 Morehead, Charles Slaughter, 125  
 Morrill tariff, 3  
 Myth, of British labor support for the North, 19–20

Napoleon III, 8  
*National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 109  
*National Co-operative Leader*, 25  
 National Labor Party, 114  
 National Labor Union, 93–94, 95, 114, 121  
 National Reform League, 91  
 National Society for Women's Suffrage, 124  
 Negroes, in Confederate Army, 20, 120–21  
 Nevins, Allan, 14  
 New England Anti-Slavery Society, 122  
 Newman, John Henry, 126  
 Newmilns, 95–96  
 New York City, 48–49  
*New York Times*, 47–50  
*New York Tribune*, 43  
 New York Working Men's Democratic Republican Association, 79–80, 111, 112  
 Nine Hours movement, 80  
 Noel, Baptist Wriothesley, 125  
*North American Review*, 117  
*North Star, The*, 120

Odger, George, 60, 107, 113; bio. sketch, 125  
*Oldham Standard*, 44–45  
 "Ostend Manifesto," 118  
 "Our Brethren in England," 190  
 "Our Friends in England—A Practical Suggestion," 47–49  
 Owsley, Frank L., 14

Palmerston, Lord (full name Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston), becomes involved in problems close to home, 74; cautious policy, 1–2; characterized, 9; decides against intervention, 18; bio. sketch, 125  
 "Peace Democrats," 111  
*People's Paper, The*, 72  
 Peterloo Massacre, 40, 53–54, 106  
 Philadelphia, 50  
 Pitt, William, 125

Plimsell, Samuel, 125  
 Poland, 18, 72, 74, 80, 81, 112  
 Poole, J. R., 18, 33, 57–58  
 Positivists, 107–108  
*Positivist Review*, 118  
 Potter, George, assures American Minister British workers support North, 66; attacked to pro-Confederate stand, 28–29; condemned by Marx, 58, 82; criticism of for pro-Confederate stand, 56; denounced for supporting Confederacy, 87; first public address in Civil War, 87; founds London Working Men's Association, 92; and the Junta, 107; keeps silent at London Trades' Council meeting, 30; praises Lincoln, 87; bio. sketch, 126  
 Potter, Thomas B., 86–87; bio. sketch, 126  
 Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, 8, 29  
 "Publicola," 63–64  
*Punch*, 4

Queen Victoria, 2

Radical Republicans, 123, 127  
 Reform Act of 1867, 91–92  
 Reform Act of 1884, 95–96  
 Reform League, 91, 92, 123  
 Reform League for Universal Suffrage, 119  
 Relief, for Lancashire workers, 8–9. *See also George Griswold*  
 Representation League, 94–95  
 Revolution of 1848, 70  
*Reynolds' Newspaper*, 12, 16, 25–27, 28, 102  
 Richardson, Henry, 104  
 Ridley, Jasper, 91  
 Rochdale, 20, 71  
 Russell, Earl, 2  
 Russell, John, 126  
 Russell, William H., 4  
 Russia, 8

St. Domingo, 57  
 St. James' Hall meeting, attacked, 62–65, 67; defended, 63–65; significance, 65–66; proceedings, 56–65, 70, 86–90  
 St. Martin's Hall meeting, 28–29, 81  
 St. Simon, 107  
 "Sambo Personality," 101  
 Sandburg, Carl, 66  
 Schilling, George A., 105  
 Schleswig-Holstein, 14  
 Schurz, Carl, 83–84; bio. sketch, 126  
*Science & Society*, 17

Scotland, 55–56  
 Scottish labor movement, 106–107  
 "Scourge," 58–59, 63–64, 109  
 Shakespeare, William, 63  
 Secession, 1  
 Seminole Indians, 73  
 Seminole War, 73  
 Seward, William H., 7, 11, 26, 29, 117; bio. sketch, 126  
 Sherman, William T., 85, 112  
 "Slave's Appeal, The," 103–104  
 "Slave Holders' War," 71–78  
 Slavery, abolished in District of Columbia, 32–33; abolished in territories, 33; abolished in United States, 90  
 Slidell, John, 7, 24, 36; bio. sketch, 126  
 Smith, Goldwin, 126  
 Smith, Kirby, 85  
 Smith, Sidney, 63–64  
*Spectator*, 4  
 Social Science Association, 120  
 Sorge, Friedrich, A., 13–14  
 Southern historians, 14  
 Southern Independence Association, 70, 71, 74–75, 78, 111  
 Stalybridge, working-class meetings, in, 39, 45, 48  
 Stanley, Edward George, 127  
 Stephens, Alexander H., 31; bio. sketch, 127  
 "Stop the War," 74–75, 111  
 Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 127  
 Suffrage, British workers demand, 54; relationship of to Civil War, 54, 76–77, 86, 90–92  
 Sumner, Charles, 62, 113; bio. sketch, 127  
*Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American War*, 19–24  
 Surat cotton, 6  
 Sylvis, William H., 114

Tariffs, 3  
 Taylor, Peter Alfred, 127  
 Taylor, Richard, 85  
 Thirteenth Amendment, 90  
 Thistlewaite, Frank, 15  
 Thomas, George H., 85  
 Tilton, Theodore, 20  
 "To the Editors and Shareholders of the *Beehive*," 68

Young, James D., 56

"To the Workmen of France from the Working Men of England," 81  
*Trades Unions and Strikes. Their Philosophy*, 120  
 Trade Union Political Union, 91  
 Trent Affair, 6–9, 98, 124, 126  
 Troup, George, attacked for pro-Confederate views, 68–69; attacks Lincoln, 68–69; attacks North, 28, 29, 30, 56, 68–69; supports Confederacy, 68–69, 103, 110

*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 127  
 Underground Railroad, 122  
 Unemployment, in England, 4–5  
 Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester, 20, 24, 51, 53, 90, 112, 122, 126  
 United States, war with England threatened, 93–95

Vincent, Henry, 127  
 "Voice of British Workingmen," 43–44  
 "Voice of the Working-Men of London," 65–66

Wage-slavery, 15–18  
 Walter, John, 127  
 Ward, John 6  
*War for the Union, The*, 14  
 Webb, Beatrice, 107  
 Webb, Sidney, 107  
*Westminster Review*, 4  
 Wilkes, Charles D., 7  
 Whittaker, John, 5–6  
 Women's Rights, 120  
 Working class meetings, Blackburn, 35–38, 45, 70; Edinburgh, 56, 70; Leeds, 70; Liverpool, 70; London, 11–12, 55–65, 70, 86–90; Manchester, 39–45, 70; Rochdale, 70; Stalybridge, 39, 45, 48, 70  
 "Working Classes and the Cotton Crisis," 47  
*Working Man, The*, 21–22, 27–28, 102  
*Working Men of Manchester and President Lincoln, The*, 43  
 Workmen's Committee, 91  
 Workmen's Peace Association, 94, 119

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